

This week! Albert W. Aiken again! "Velvet Hand," in which appears "Injun Dick."

NEW YORK Saturday Journal

A HOME WEEKLY

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1877, by BEADLE AND ADAMS, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

Vol. VIII.

E. F. Beadle,
William Adams,
David Adams,
PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK, JUNE 23, 1877.

TERMS IN ADVANCE
One copy, four months, \$1.00
One copy, one year, \$2.00
Two copies, one year, \$3.00

No. 380

IN SUMMERTIME.

BY EREN E. HENFORD.

The rose is blossoming out on the spray,
A little red world that will last for a day.
The mother-bird broods on her mossy nest,
With a sweeter song in her speckled breast.
Than was ever caught in any words
Of the curious language of men or birds.
The bee is a-swing in the scented bells
Of honeysuckles and asphodels.
The robin is rocking, too lazy to sing,
Or put his head under his dappled wing;
Rocking and swinging, and now and then
He chirps to his mate, and is mute again.
I hear the tinkle of bells afar
On the sun-drenched slopes where the daisies are.
The low of cattle comes down the hills,
And blends with the ripple of laughing rills.
The air is sweet with the scent of grass,
That has fallen in swaths where the mowers pass.
There is silence here that is full of sound,
And I dream that the world is enchanted ground.
I hear in the music of brook and bird
A language that fits no spoken word,
But is written out by the hand of God
From his great warm heart in the sky and sod.
I dream while the sleepy robin swings,
Of a thousand happy and peaceful things,
For care is banished, and gone away
From sight and sound of this happy day.
My thoughts are so restful, from care so free,
That they seem like the song of a drowsy bee,
Sung to the chiming of lily-bells,
Swung by a wind-elf in wildwood dells.
Oh, days of summer, so full of rest!
Oh, dreams that are only dreams at best!
I would keep you always, if that might be,
But work, not dreaming, is waiting for me.

"Richard is Himself Again."

The Velvet Hand:

OR,

THE IRON GRIP OF INJUN DICK.

A Wild Story of the Cinnabar Mines.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "INJUN DICK," "OVERLAND KIT,"
"ROCKY MOUNTAIN BOB," "KENTUCK
THE SPORT," ETC., ETC.

PROLOGUE.

NOT DEAD BUT SLEEPING.

DARK and gloomy were the clouds that lowered around great Shasta's snow-covered peak. The hour of midnight was near at hand, and the slow-rising moon, struggling in the embrace of the thick and envious clouds, barely lighted up the night.

On the north-western side of the peak, where one of the edges of the old crater had broken away, thus forming a small circular plateau about a hundred yards in diameter, a huge fire was brightly burning.

By the fire, and feeding the flames, stood a tall, dark form.

The copper-colored face, the massive features, as well as the forest-prairie garb of deerskin which he wore plainly told that the man was native to the soil.

Far below in the valley twinkled the lights of the mining town of Cinnabar, and in the main street of that young metropolis of the Shasta valley, a group of miners were gathered, eagerly trying, with the aid of a powerful glass, to discover the meaning of the unusual beacon blazing so brightly on the side of giant Shasta's peak.

"Some of the buck's heathen ceremonies!" the word went around, as, by the aid of the glass, the miners made out that the tall form standing by the burning pile was a savage chief.

Little did the men of Cinnabar dream that the blazing beacon was to serve as a funeral pyre for the mortal remains of the long-bearded Cherokee, the Injun Dick of "Overland Kit," the untiring pursuer of "Rocky Mountain Bob," the Richard Talbot, superintendent of the Cinnabar Mine, of "Kentucky," and the dreaded White Rider, the Death-Shot of Shasta, who made such a fearful fight for the Cinnabar lode, as detailed in the pages of "Injun Dick."

"Give my body to the flames on Shasta's side," the hero had muttered, after receiving the chance shot, his death-wound, seemingly.

And O-wa-te (Mud-turtle), the Blackfoot chief, who had traveled far from the home of his tribe, seeking the friend of his early days in the golden California land, promised to respect the injunction.

Then the stricken man had swooned away, and the Indian, bending anxiously over the still form, believed that death's dark angel had set his fatal signet upon the brow of lion-hearted Talbot.

Motionless by the side of the body, with his head muffled in his blanket after the fashion of his people when mourning for the loved and lost, the chief had remained until the midnight hour was near at hand; then, to the top of Shasta's peak he bore the senseless form of the man who had been unto him like a brother.

The funeral pyre was kindled, and as the



The two road-agents nodded to their chief when he appeared, for the solitary horseman was Captain Death.

flames roared and sparkled high in the air, the Indian knelt by the side of the form, now so cold and still, a last farewell to take.

The eyes of the chief were heavy with tears as he looked upon the face of the man he had loved so well. Even the stoic nature of the savage gave way before the grief of that sad hour.

And then, bending over, he took the helpless form within his arms.

A second only the Indian pressed the senseless figure against his own broad breast, and then with a wild start and a half-shriek, almost womanly in its nature, he placed the body again upon the cold earth, and glared with eager eyes upon the passive face.

Life was not yet extinct!

In some little corner of the manly frame the vital spark still lingered.

The random shot had struck fairly home, but so strong the constitution of Iron-limbed Injun Dick that the potent lead, which would have carried death to almost any other mortal, had only produced a deathlike swoon.

The heart was beating feebly, and the savage chief, well gifted in the rude medical practice of his race, doubted not that he could save the stricken man.

The fight for the Cinnabar mine was not yet ended! Injun Dick Talbot lived, and while he breathed no mortal man might hope to possess the Cinnabar lode in peace. Again it would be war to the knife!

The eyes opened; the great dark eyes, as keen as the orbs of a wildcat, and yet at times as soft in their light and as lustrous as the star-gazers of a beautiful girl.

Slowly the life came back to the manly form, and then, as the red chief raised the head of the reviving man upon his knee, the eyes of Talbot fell upon the distant lights of Cinnabar.

"Again I pass from the shadows of the valley of death, and wake to life; Cinnabar, thy glories are mine, and mortal man shall not wrest them from me. By fair means or foul again I'll own the Cinnabar lode, and woe to the men who dare to stand between me and my prize!"

And the pale stars, glittering above, registered the oath.

CHAPTER I.

THE VELVET HAND.

AGAIN we write of the young metropolis of the Shasta valley, thriving Cinnabar City. We take up the recital of the fortunes of this

celebrated town and its inhabitants just one year from the time when the beacon fire, blazing on the side of Shasta, had attracted the attention of the inhabitants.

And, during the year, Cinnabar had changed considerably. Many of the former inhabitants had departed, and fresh ones had taken their places.

The Cinnabar lode had been sold for taxes, and had been purchased for quite a small sum by a gentleman named Fernando del Colma, a native Californian, originally a cattle-raiser on the lower coast, near Los Angeles.

Del Colma was a man of thirty, apparently; a true Spanish-Mexican-American—a man of medium size, dark eyes, dark hair, pointed mustache and beard, complexion of tawny hue, little feet, little hands, almost effeminate in their character. A settled melancholy seemed to brood over on his handsome, haughty features. Great contrast was he, every inch a gentleman, to the rude and uncultivated men by whom he was surrounded.

He was a true descendant of the old race—the cattle-breeding, pleasure-loving, proud, haughty, but gentlemanly lords of California, who held the land in vast tracts before the gold discoveries brought in the pushing, adventuring Anglo-Saxons.

There was nothing in common between the old race and the new men, and little by little the rancheros gave way to the gold-miners.

Fernando's father had been one of the largest landed proprietors on the lower coast, and, dying, had bequeathed to his two children, Fernando and his sister Blanche, a large fortune.

Fernando, careless and unthrifty, like all his race, had made sad havoc with his money, until at last the day of reckoning came, and the young man found that few of his father's broad acres remained unincumbered.

Pleasure must cease and work begin.

During his trips to San Francisco he had made the acquaintance of a dashing young fellow, who called himself Bertrand Redan, and this gentleman, who professed to be well acquainted with the upper mining country, had often advised Fernando to try his luck in a mining speculation.

So, upon discovering that something must be done to retrieve his impaired fortunes, Del Colma had turned all his property into ready cash, and acting upon Redan's advice, had bought the Cinnabar mine; and, as he knew very little about mining matters, Redan accepted the position of superintendent, and agreed to manage the whole affair.

A handsome, dashing-looking fellow was

Redan, being rather tall in stature, well built, with black eyes and hair, which he wore long and curling, very white skin, and with a general air of refinement.

A pretty fair miner, too, as he quickly proved when he set the men to work to clear up the rubbish which had accumulated around the Cinnabar works, and proceeded to put the mine in working order.

An evil name the Cinnabar lode bore; too much blood and treasure had already been expended there, and the old residents of the town, who knew something of the mine in the old days, shook their heads sagely, and "reckoned" that no luck would come from meddling with the lode which had already cost one Indian war, to say nothing of the officials of the town who had fallen by the desperate hand of the Death Shot of Shasta.

Some of these sayings had come to the ears of Del Colma, but he shrugged his shoulders with true Spanish indifference, and proceeded to erect a cottage just outside the Cinnabar property, a small, snug dwelling, and in looks superior to any other in town.

Cinnabar City was not particularly well supplied with women, and what there was, as a general rule, were rather weather-beaten and ugly. It was a matter, then, of little wonder that the arrival of Blanche del Colma excited a great deal of interest, for Blanche was a beauty. No fairer girl had ever stepped foot within the Shasta valley. She was strikingly like her brother; the same eyes, the same hair, and the same peculiar melancholy expression.

She was as sweet by nature as one of the juicy oranges of her own sunny clime, but as proud as though she had been born to a queen's estate.

Blanche del Colma had lived a month in Cinnabar, and yet no gentleman of the town could boast that he was a friend of the charming girl; very few indeed could lay claim to even a simple acquaintance.

Still she was no recluse; hardly a pleasant day but saw her in the saddle. She rode a spotted mustang, a creature of infinite beauty, as though she was born to the back of a steed.

But there was nothing in common between the fair Spanish-blooded girl and the gay young fellows of the town. She was not for them, nor they for her. In her sight they were rude, rough men, and she would have as soon thought of entertaining an affection for one of the half-blood herdsmen upon her father's estate as to allow her maiden fancy to be pleased with one of these sturdy men of Cinnabar.

Romantic by nature, she looked for a gallant lover, some stranger from beyond the seas, one of the old race, perchance, from whence her line had sprung.

Del Colma, like most native Californians, was a slave to some of the peculiar traits of his race. He was a hard drinker, deeply addicted to play, lacked the thrift and caution of the Anglo-Saxon, and was as careless with his money as though he still possessed the broad acres that his father once had owned near to the "city of the Angels," on the southern coast, and, naturally, his love for gambling, and for strong liquor, brought him often in contact with the young fellows of the town.

Therefore, when in company with the gay bucks of Cinnabar, he had encountered Blanche, common courtesy had compelled him to introduce his companions.

Small benefit, though, the introduction had been to the enamored youths. A cold bow and a scant "good-morning" were all that the Californian beauty vouchsafed in return for their elaborate salutations.

There was a small group of friends, generally found together after the toils of the day were done, and commonly termed by the miners the "Occidental gang," with whom Del Colma was quite intimate, and as the members of the "gang" were the leading men of the town, it was only natural that one and all, with one exception, should be ardent admirers of the fair senorita.

Clint MacAlpine, formerly postmaster, but now mayor of the city; John Rocks, usually termed "Sandy" Rocks, largely interested in the Queen City Mining Company of Angell's Bar, a thriving suburb of Cinnabar; "Judge" Bob Candy, the express-agent; Billy King, formerly the barkeeper, but now the thriving proprietor of the Occidental Hotel; Leo Pollock, the largest storekeeper in the town, were the principal members of the Occidental "gang," and with the Occidentals, too, was usually to be found one of the most noted characters of the city at the time of which we write. He was a man of thirty or thereabouts, a little above the medium size, with a strong, manly face, a well-knit figure, and a bearing which stamped him as a captain among captains. His face was always smoothly shaven, and he was as neat and careful in his dress as though he were a promenadeur fresh from the asphalt pavements of la belle Paris, rather than a denizen of one of the roughest little mining towns to be found in all California.

He dressed so oddly that, once seen, he was not apt to be forgotten. A complete suit of black velvet he wore; coat, vest, and pantaloons, the hat even, were of the same material, and his ruffled shirt-bosom, wherein gleamed two tiny diamond studs, was a miracle of art. The best card-player in all Northern California this gentleman was reputed to be, and, clear from Yreka to Mount Shasta, he was known as "The Velvet Hand of Cinnabar."

Richard Velvet he called himself, and he had such a soft, "taking" way with him, as many a foolhardy miner, confident in his skill in card-playing, had found to his cost, and he was always so cool, so self-possessed, that it was not long before "Richard Velvet," that new sharp, became shortened to "Velvet Hand," and the gentleman in question rather liked the title, so that he got into the habit of giving his name as Velvet Hand. These little nicknames stick on the Pacific slope.

Many a skillful player of cards was there in the territory tributary to the lively city of Cinnabar, but not one of the tribe could win with the ease and grace of Velvet Hand.

A strange fact, too, about this quiet gentleman, and one which his companions had often noted and commented upon: he alone of all the young men of the town seemed not to have fallen a victim to the charms of Blanche del Colma; he alone of all the Occidental gang had not secured an introduction to the dark-eyed beauty, and yet he was on more intimate terms with Fernando del Colma, her brother, than any other man in the town—Bertrand Redan, the superintendent of the Cinnabar works, alone excepted.

Many a time the gray light of the morn had peeped in at the window of a little private room on the second floor of the Occidental Hotel to find the Californian and the Velvet Hand hard at play, with a week's production of the Cinnabar lode trembling in the balance; and seldom it was that Del Colma rose a winner from the table.

And when Mr. Dick Velvet was rallied about his avoidance of the glowing beauty, so rich in all her wondrous charms, and asked why, being so intimate with the brother, he had not tried to push his fortune with the sister—for the cool sport was as good-looking a gentleman as there was in the town—he would laughingly reply that women were "dead ones" to him, and that as long as he depended upon card-playing to keep ahead of the world he would give the softer sex a wide berth.

Thus matters stood in the year 1877, when we again take up the pen to chronicle the doings of the men of Cinnabar.

CHAPTER II.

THE HAND OF CAPTAIN DEATH.

THREE miles from Cinnabar City the Shasta river cut its way through the McCloud canyon. Dark and deep was the defile—as lonely a spot as could be found within a dozen miles of the mining settlement.

At the upper end of the canyon this defile widened out into a small rocky valley, through which ran the old Indian trail leading from Chinabur up the river.

Along the trail, in the dusk of the evening, a horseman was riding. He was well mounted, well armed, and seemed familiar with the road, for he pushed straight onward without hesitation.

When he reached the open valley above the McClellan canyon, he halted for a moment, cast a careful glance around him as if suspicious of observation, then spurred his horse over the steep rocks until he reached the side of the rocky wall. There he dismounted. Drawing a black mask from his pocket, he covered his face with it. This done, he pushed his way through a dense clump of bushes, leading his horse by the bridle, and disappeared, apparently having made his way right into the solid rock; but if the clump of bushes had been removed, the mouth of a cave—a narrow cleft, just wide enough to allow the entrance of a horse—would have been visible.

Within the narrow passage all was dark as Egypt, but the masked man proceeded without hesitation, apparently familiar with the road, until a winding in the passage suddenly brought him into a vaulted chamber in the rock; thirty feet at least in diameter it was.

Within the apartment, the roof of which extended considerably up into the rock, evidently having an outlet above, were two other horses—two other men.

The horses were quietly munching their oats in some rude stalls constructed at the further end of the apartment.

The men, roughly dressed, miner fashion, and also hiding their faces behind black masks, were seated upon some buffalo-robes, seemingly waiting for the arrival of the newcomer.

A couple of lanterns suspended from spikes driven into the walls afforded light.

The moment the horseman released his grasp on the bridle, the animal hastened to join the other two, thus plainly proving that he was no stranger to the cavern and its mysteries.

And this secret chamber in the heart of the hill was the mountain home of the daring and bloody road-agent known far and wide in the Shasta valley as Captain Death.

And who was Captain Death?

Ah! that was a question that often had been put but as yet had not been answered.

About a year before the time of which we write Captain Death had first made his appearance in the Shasta valley.

A stage-coach, northward bound for Yreka, had been halted in a gloomy defile, seven or eight miles from the city of Chinabur, and robbed of its express matter.

A single man had done the job. The driver, perceiving that the road-agent was alone, had attempted—contrary to the general habit of his class—to offer resistance, but had been promptly tumbled off his box by a well-directed shot fired by the outlaw.

The frightened passengers, four in number, had fled from the hack in hot haste at the driver's downfall, never offering a sign of resistance; then the "gentleman of the road" had coolly proceeded to appropriate the valuables. This finished he had addressed a few words to the disabled driver, who lay groaning on the ground, cursing the evil star which led him to offer resistance to the bird of prey.

"My name is Captain Death," he said, in a coarse, evidently disguised voice. "I'm going to run this hyer trail for a time and I want the folks hereabouts to understand that I mean business, every time! If they knuckle down and let me go through 'em, all right! If they don't, then look out for sudden death!"

With this the bird of prey coolly rode off.

Of course Wells and Fargo, the owners of the stage line, were not going to stand any of this nonsense; therefore, they went for Captain Death lively, but little good it did them, too; not a single trace of the desperado could they discover!

After a time the search was given up, as the road-agent was supposed to have been driven off by the urgent chase; but, just as everybody had come to the conclusion that they wouldn't hear any more of the bold rider, another coach going north was attacked, and this time Captain Death had two companions.

A desperate resistance was offered by one of the passengers, an old man, who carried a small fortune on his person, and who was accompanied by his daughter. All fled from the hack but he, fierce at the prospect of losing his gold.

Captain Death called upon him to surrender; he refused, when, without more ado, the road-agent opened fire upon the coach, mortally wounding at the first discharge both the old man and his daughter, but, although staining their souls with this terrible crime, the outlaws did not secure the prize they were in search of, for the up coach from Yreka happening to approach just at that moment, compelled the rascals to retreat in hot haste.

This bloody deed created a terrible excitement; and for a time the road-agents disappeared, but when the excitement cooled down again they haunted the road.

The name of Captain Death became as well known along the trail as the express line itself, but so cunningly did he manage that never by any chance did one of the many expeditions in pursuit of him ever get fairly upon his trail.

That Captain Death was well posted as to the designs of his pursuers was evident; he had "friends at court" and they gave him timely warning when danger threatened him.

The two road-agents nodded to their chief when he appeared, for the solitary horseman was the notorious Captain Death, in person. He took a seat on one of the buffalo-robes, lighted a cigarette, commenced smoking as he looked, inquiringly, upon his followers.

"Any news?" he asked.

"Not any," responded the road-agent on the right, a tall, broad-shouldered fellow who was known as No. 1.

Captain Death had organized his band in a peculiar manner. The faith of man he distrusted, and therefore neither one of his companions knew who he was, or had ever seen him without his mask. He had picked his two men, had approached them at night, disguised, and enrolled them, neither one knowing the other.

"For our own safety," as he had explained, "it is best we should be as strangers to each other. Then if one is taken he cannot denounce his companions."

And so, with covered faces, the outlaws always met. Names were never mentioned. The leader was addressed as captain, the first road-agent, the burly fellow, as No. 1, the second, a thin, tall individual, as No. 2.

"Nothing stirring, eh?"

"Notin' that I hear of," replied No. 2, with a strong nasal accent.

"It is some time since we made a raise."

"Yes," responded No. 1, with a melancholy shake of the head. "Dry as dust an' nothin' to keep the jints limber."

"Bout time we struck a riddle, somewhar I calculate!" No. 2 suggested.

"I've got a big job on hand, boys," Captain Death said; "no road-agent business this time, but something that will pay us better. You know the Chinabur mine?"

Both of the men nodded.

"That's our mutton!"

The two men shook their heads; they did not understand.

"The mine is a rich one," No. 1, observed.

"Tain't payin' much yet," No. 1, observed. "That is because it has not yet got fairly to work, but it will pay, though. A friend of mine wants it, but as it would take twenty-five or thirty thousand dollars to buy it he proposes that we shall get it for him, which we can at a less figure. Fernando del Colma is at the end of his rope; all the money he has is in the mine; there's a mortgage of ten thousand dollars due on it next week. He hopes to push that mortgage off for a month and in the mean time get out ere enough to meet it. Now we must raise blazes generally; damage the machinery, get the hands on a strike, stop work by any means so that the place will have to be sold by the sheriff, then my friend will pay two or three thousand dollars for the services we render in the matter."

"Toll out!" cried No. 1, suddenly. "Is your friend named Injun Dick Talbot?"

"Injun Dick Talbot," said Captain Death, slowly; "what do you mean?"

"Why, that if it isn't Injun Dick he ought as well hang up his fiddle!" No. 1 replied.

"Tell you what it is, Cap, I know a heap 'bout this hyer town! That air Chinabur mine belongs to Injun Dick, the Death Shot of the Shasta as he's been called! It's an onlooky consarn; I've bin expectin' to see Dick pop in and bust it up as he allers has done afore."

"I never heard of him," Captain Death said, dryly; "and I reckon that he won't trouble my scheme any."

"That Velvet Hand is tryin' to bust the Chinabur consarn as fast as he kin," No. 2 remarked, abruptly. "I heered last night that he winned a thousand dollars from Del Colma in a single settin'."

"I shouldn't be surprised; but now to business; remember! Do all that is in your power to stop the mine from working. If we can fetch Del Colma into the hands of the sheriff it will be a couple of thousand dollars in our pockets. We must let the stages alone for awhile, for the pursuit is still hot, and in the mean time can amuse ourselves with this little game. The third night hence we will meet here again."

"Say, Cap," cried No. 1, abruptly, "wouldn't it be a good idea to go for this Velvet Hand? I reckon that he would pan out right lively if we got him up hyer end."

"That is worth thinking of," Captain Death replied, rising; "and now, boys, be careful how you approach the cave, for if our hiding-place was once discovered it would be all up with us."

And then the three separated, each one to make his way back to Chinabur, by different roads.

The plot against Del Colma was working.

CHAPTER III.

THE GAMESTERS.

The first gray streaks of the coming moon, lining the eastern skies and heralding the approach of the sun-god, peeped in at the window of a small, plainly-furnished room, situated in the second story of the Occidental Hotel.

Within the room, a table between them, were seated two men, busily engaged at cards. The floor was strewn with crumpled cards; 'tis the losing gamester's whim to try a fresh pack every now and then in order to woo the fickle dame, Fortune.

That the two men had been at their game all night long was evident, for the candles were burning low, and the bed in one corner of the apartment had not been used.

The two men were quite a contrast to each other; the first, a good specimen of the Anglo-Saxon race, the second bearing the impress of the old Spanish line in every feature.

A single glance at the first—the winner evidently, for he was cool and unruffled, and as clear of eye as if he had not spent the livelong night at the card-table—and from his peculiar garb he is easily recognized as the Velvet Hand of Chinabur.

And the second, too, so strongly marked in feature, quite fit to sit for the portrait of Hernando Cortez, the conqueror of Mexico, was the man arrayed in the olden garb, no trouble to recognize in him the Californian, Fernando del Colma, the owner of the Chinabur mine.

The players are ciphering up the results of the game.

"Five hundred dollars I owe you," Colma said, with a gloomy brow. "The fiend take the cards! Will my luck never change?"

"I'm afraid not, senor," the winner replied; "not until you change your style of playing."

The observation irritated the Californian.

"Am I not as good a player then as you?" he exclaimed, loftily, a true Spaniard in his arrogant way.

"No, not as good," Velvet Hand replied, coolly.

"And why not? It is the cards that favor you, when my hand is good, you hold a better."

"Oh, no, only I know the value of hands better than you do, and I keep my temper. I play for amusement, you for money."

The Californian rose to his feet indignantly.

"You forget yourself, senor!" he exclaimed, mortally offended, reaching for his cloak and beginning to drop it around him in the picturesque Mexican fashion. "I am a gentleman of birth and fortune! Gold! I was born to it, and to me it is so much dust, while you—" he hesitated.

The Velvet Hand, busy now in trimming his nails with a little pearl-handled knife, laughed outright.

"Let me finish the sentence for you, senor," he said. "I am a gambler, a man who lives by card-playing. No social match for you, senor. You are an honest gentleman, the proprietor of the richest mine in the town, and yet you curse your evil fortune when luck goes against you and you lose a few hundred dollars. I, on the contrary, am a social pariah with not a friend on earth, and yet I lose my money with a smile and laugh at the decrees of fortune."

"Forgive me, senor!" Del Colma exclaimed, hastily, his generous nature touched by the frank coolness of the other. "I did not mean to wound you. I do lose my temper and play badly; I confess it. I am not a man of ice; it is not the money I care for, but the losing—that is what galls me! You have won from me five thousand dollars since we commenced playing two weeks ago and I can ill spare the money."

"Why play then?" was the natural question.

"I cannot help it!" cried the Californian, desperately. "There is a fiend within me that craves the excitement."

"It's lucky for you that you have got the

Chinabur mine to back you," the other said, carelessly. "By the by, you're doing very well, ain't you?"

"No, not yet."

"Yes, but we have hardly got the machinery in working order."

"By the way, senor, you and I have got to be pretty intimate, considering that you are the owner of one of the richest properties in the town, and that I am only a poor devil of a card-sharp, and so I'm going to make bold to give you a point or two, for I've had a good deal of experience in mining; that is, if you are willing to receive the advice in the same spirit in which it is given."

"I shall be honored, senor," Del Colma replied, with a stately bow.

"I took a look at the works this afternoon. I knew the mine in the old time, and I had a sort of curiosity to see how the place appeared."

The wisest head could not have guessed from the cool way in which the man spoke, of the terrible flood of bitter recollections which the Chinabur mine recalled to his mind.

The machinery you are using is not exactly the right sort, and you've got the toughest set of hands there that I think I ever saw, and your superintendent—Bertrand Redan, do you call him?"

The Californian nodded. "Have you perfect faith in him?"

"As in my brother!" Del Colma replied, with true Spanish warmth.

"Ah, that's lucky; he has full charge of everything, I presume!"

"Yes, of everything."

"A man that you can trust is invaluable," the cool sharp observed, carelessly.

The Californian, open and generous-hearted by nature, took Velvet Hand's doubtful words as a compliment to his superintendent.

"Yes, he is invaluable, and yet my sister does not trust him," he remarked, slowly.

"No!" the American was surprised; "women have been instinctive sometimes."

"She does not like him. I am astonished, for he is a fine, noble fellow, and I fear he cared more for my naughty sister than he should," and then the don suddenly checked himself; he was not wont to speak so openly of the lovely Blanche, dearer to him than the apple of his eye. "The amount I owe you I have not with me—"

"Your word is quite sufficient," Velvet Hand replied, carelessly.

The Californian hesitated; it was evident that he disliked to remain a debtor.

"Stay!" he exclaimed, abruptly, drawing a diamond ring from his little finger and placing it upon the table; "take this as security for the sum."

The other shook his head.

"I would rather not."

"Nay, I insist! Life is uncertain; I may die before I pay the debt."

"Don't let that trouble you; I should consider the account settled."

"Pray oblige me!"

The senor was thoroughly in earnest, and as the easiest way to settle the matter, Velvet Hand placed the ring upon his little finger.

"The sun is rising," the Californian remarked, approaching the window, and as he did so he caught sight of his sister riding past, mounted upon her spotted Mustang.

Hardly had the sound of her horse's hoofs died away in the distance when a fearful uproar arose on the air, and from the door of a low saloon, opposite the hotel, came forth a motley gang, bearing a Chinaman in their midst.

Harder characters than were in the crowd could not be found within the territory of Chinabur.

There was Yuba Bill, one of the recognized bullies of the town; Joe Bowers, the fat and greasy bummer; Doc Slater, the smartest horse-thief north of Frisco; Col. Tom Pipkin, as arrant a knave as ever dwelt within a white jail, and half a dozen other scamps equally as bad.

The crowd along a rope over the limb of a convenient tree, adjusted a noose around the neck of the trembling, crying almondy-eyed son of the East, from whose flowing sleeves sundry "face" cards were dropping, and prepared to swing him up.

"By Jove!" cried the card-sharp, throwing up the window-sash; "it's Hop-Ling-Ki, and he's the only man in town that can do up my ruffled shirts! They mustn't hang him, or I'm dished!"

Out of the window then, nimble as a monkey, went Velvet Hand, while the Californian rushed down the stairway.

(To be continued.)

Ruby and Gold.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

The place was as wild as if dropped intact from pre-Adamite chaos. The scrubby evergreen oak caught its clinging roots in pockets of soil in imperceptible fissures and hollows on the seemingly bald surface of those gigantic rocks, and the tiny thread of a waterfall shivered in mid-air and dissolved in a white veil of mist as it fell in a sheer descent of a hundred feet and gathered again in an ice-cold, limpid pool, on the edge of which those few adventurous spirits, led by Walt Marquis, had made their camp.

Marquis himself was standing a solitary figure on a great projecting bowlder midway up the light. Rock and man might have been cut from bronze, so motionless was the figure with folded arms and eyes bent upon the rainbow which spanned the fall.

For the time the mission which had brought him here, the passions which sway men and the objects which make the sum of human existence, were blotted out in his contemplation of that varied scene.

But his followers were not losing their time in poetic abstraction. They had separated and scattered among the rocks and black, gaping fissures. The sun had gone down when they all met again about their rude repast of crack-cakes, dried buffalo-meat and steaming black coffee. Walt was back from dreamland by this time, with a keen appetite developed by the mountain air, fully alive to his own interests again, and eager to learn the result of the others' explorations.

"I don't like the look of things," said Worth. "It isn't what I was led to expect. The place couldn't be more upset if an earthquake had been at work here. The slope that's put down on the map for the left side of the stream is on the right; the big chestnut that stood on the bank is now uppermost half a mile away, and there's no mention of a fall. There's been the mischief to pay here at some time, bet your life on it, Walt, and for all I kin see there ain't even a 'salt' to pay you for your trouble."

"For, all that, the geological formation promises gold, and the work done here was just enough to make the promise a certainty."

"Geological fiddlesticks!" cut in Worth, contemptuously. "I'd give more for a show of

the color than any of them calculations. If it paid, what did old Vanstallar want to give you the chance for? I've got it in my head that you've been sent here on a fool's errand, if not for something worse, Walt, and I suspicion, if all's told, there's something besides gold at the bottom of your pig-headedness, running counter to every bit of advice that's given you."

They had finished the meal by this time, and stretched themselves on the grass. Worth with his hands clasped over his knees and black pipe alight, Walt watching the twinkle of peeping stars in the silver-gray distance while he listened to his companion's half-grumbling tone.

"So there is," he answered the last remark. "Something more precious than gold by far. The price of my success will be—Ruby. Now, Worth, you are my chief dependence. I rely on you not to discourage the other men. Besides, my good fortune will be yours and theirs as well."

Worth was far from satisfied.

"I thought there was something behind this move, and now I'm sure of it. As well talk to them stones yonder as try to turn you, Walt, but you'll see yet that I am right. Old Vanstallar never promised you little black-eyes and sent you here for nothing. One thing bothers me—how that stream goes clean over the wall when its natural course would have been to work around the cut."

"That was its original bed. The miners turned it from its course and so dug over the bottom and undermined the banks that it is little wonder you did not recognize the old watercourse with its position on the map. Just wait till morning, my boy, and see what a glorious opening they and the cascade together have left free for us. There's a natural tunnel worked through the ridge above, a dry and roomy passage now, and using that for a short cut, we will honeycomb the hill from their deserted mine but that we find the continuance of the leads those other fellows missed."

It was one month later. There was a sulphurous heat in the air, a dead hush under a burning sky, that made every breath drawn an oppressive gasp. A knot of discontented men, with Worth for their speaker, were facing Walt.

"We've give it a fair trial, and all the gold we've found kin be worked up in a goose-quill. Provisions have run low, there's a big storm a-brewin', and the boys won't stay with the prospect of impassable roads and starvation staring them in the eyes."

"No man is obliged to stay against his will, not even you, Worth; but I know you won't desert me."

Worth's face set doggedly.

"I won't stay to encourage you in a fool's quest. The sooner you throw this up for a bad job the easier you'll git off. We've made up our minds; we take the back track this very day, with you or without you, just as you like."

And it was without him, notwithstanding Worth's after entreaties and arguments.

"I've heard of crazy men diggin' their own graves," declared the latter at last, in angry tones; "and I declare, I believe, it's what you're bent on. It's my opinion that old Van only sent you here to git you out of the way while he marries Black-eyes to the fellow he's chose for her. If he hasn't, I've more than a mind to cut in and take her from you myself just to teach you a lesson."

Walt laughed.

"I can trust Ruby against all of you," he said, but certain apprehensions he had felt before were aroused by the other's speech, and haunted him in his succeeding solitude. Why had Vanstallar, his bitter enemy always, given him this chance?

"I know the value of both money and brains," the wealthy old ranchman had said on that occasion, "and I'm not going to give my girl to any man that hasn't plenty of both. If you can get the first out of the deserted mine by any exercise of the last, you're welcome to your chance."

Evidently, Vanstallar had little faith in the mine, but after a careful study of the locality, Walt's enthusiasm rose. Still, he had had his misgivings, and had been on the watch for any sign of possible treachery since, but none had come.

He worked as he had never worked before after his companions left him. Two days passed, and then the storm which had been gathering broke. Out by one dense cloud flopped up from the horizon, a breath of air rustled the foliage, then a sudden gust swept the face of the mountain, lashing the stoutest trees like switches, tearing out shrubs by the root, driving the dust in choking clouds, and dislodging insecure fragments of rock that thundered down into unseen abysses whose haunting reverberations were taken up and passed, fainter and fainter into the farther distance. The forked lightnings poured forth in a blinding flash, and the rain swept down in sheets that penetrated the miserable miner's cabin, threatening to demolish it with every boisterous gust. But the fury of the storm was of short duration. When it had settled into a steady, monotonous downpour, Walt was back at his work in the furthest passage of the mine, the light in his cap making weird shadows dance upon the walls, and the sound of his pick mingling with a kind of muffled roar that at first he attributed to the elements raging without. Before he had struck a dozen blows he found a sloppy pool gathered at his feet. He moved from his place mechanically and glanced around. The water was at his ankles now, creeping stealthily and silently upward, and after one dazed moment of uncomprehending wonder, the meaning of the calamity which had befallen him flashed upon Walt.

The thread-like stream, turbulent and swollen now, had burst its artificial bonds, and was finding its way back to its natural channel. With a wild cry rising to his lips he turned and fled. It was a race for life, and the treacherous waters had the best of it. He was swept from his feet as he reached the turning of that first passage, his light went out, he lost his breath and his senses almost until the current dashed him against a projecting point, and he clung to the ragged rocks with his mangled, bleeding hands, finding a foothold from which the raging torrent was powerless to tear him. And still the water rose higher and higher. It was about his shoulders, it crept like a slimy coil to his neck, then it was at his lips, and he turned his face upward with the instinct of a despairing soul that would commend itself to Heaven.

Through the blackness of Tartarus that filled the place came a single ray of light like the glimmer of a distant star. There was no way to reach it, no way to leave his present position without falling prey to the mad current that filled the tunnel beyond, foaming to its roof, but something like hope thrilled him with the discovery.

A minute or two went by like as many ages, and still he stood, living, breathing, hoping

more as the truth stole slowly over him. The water had ceased to rise.

Assured of that, the next thing was to form some plan of escape. He felt of the wall about him, and managed to draw his boots where he stood. Then, using his clasp-knife, driven firmly in to the hilt, for a support where no other presented itself, he began to climb slowly toward the gleam of light. It was leaving a desperate situation for one more desperate. He was chilled to the bone, and the weight of his water-soaked clothing dragged him back, his hands and feet were so torn that they marked every painful inch of the way with their blood. But cool nerve and brave effort won him success this far. He reached the aperture through which the light streamed in, and thrusting his arm in the fissure he struck in his knife again as he felt his foothold giving way. The blade broke off short, and the handle went ringing down from his benumbed hand. Next instant his feet slipped, and he hung by his arms only above the chasm.

Oh, fool! Below he would have stood a chance when the water subsided; here it was but a question of moments until he must lose his hold and fall to sure destruction. He groaned in his despair, and shut his eyes upon the light which was only a mockery, piercing its way as it did through one tiny crevice between tons of clay and gravel that barred his way to the outer world.

Oh, Heavenly Love! Was that a shout, or only a fancy of his reeling brain? It came again. He gathered strength to give one answering cry. Then the crevice was darkened, something rattled within it, lodged, then came again, and a coil of rope reached his faltering grasp. How he fastened it about him, and waited through the two long hours during which pick and spade were plying with a will above him, was like a dream of agony to him for the remainder of his life.

Eager hands reached in and drew him forth at last, such a pallid, blood-stained spectacle, that somebody there broke out with a despairing cry:

"Oh, he is dead! Oh, Walt! my Walt!"

But he had life enough left to open his eyes and stare at her in weak amazement, gasping:

"Ruby!"

Ruby it was, with a story to tell of the plot she had discovered. How the importunities of Walt's jealous rival had drawn the revelation from her father that he had sent the young fellow to his doom. The mine could only be worked with greatest peril; sooner or later the force of the resisting stream would break through its barriers, and every workman there would be drowned like a rat in its hole. How, overhearing this delicate confession and having no one she could trust or send, she had come herself to warn him.

Worth took up the tale there. His heart had misgiven him, and he had turned back from his fellows, intending to rejoin his friend. He had encountered Ruby, and together they had reached the spot in time.

"And after this," said the girl, who felt her hands, clasped in his, drawn nearer and nearer to his beating heart, "I am yours if you'll take the gift, Walt. I'm of age and free to act, and that has released me from every filial duty I owe."

Worth, with a handful of the clay he had shoveled out squelched and broken on his palm, and supposed to be hearing something of this lover's aside, broke out, jubilantly:

"Ruby and gold, Walt. Hurrah, Ruby and gold! We've struck it, the richest lode I ever set my eyes on. How'll old Van feel when we tell him the upshot of his plot, do you think?"

Nettled and resentful enough, you

THE FOOTPRINTS.

BY A. W. BELLAW.

Your broad lands boast one bare place
Whereon nothing grows to grow.
Was it accident or grace
Led me hither? From below
With an idle eye, half shut,
Up this path I came and found
This proud imprint of your foot
Stamp of beauty in the ground!

Maud, I know you keenly and cold
Whom I thought as warm as fire;
Whom now other arms enfold—
Whom now other eyes admire.
Passion broke the perfect spell
Wherein love so lived serene—
Dead at last where wild words fell—
Words that better had not been.

You were proud and I was poor,
Maud, there's a sin to be atoned;
There is wrong at some one's door
Though it ever be unknown.
And the far past's paining way
Of the present seems a part,
There's a footprint in the clay
And another in the heart.

Sixteen and Forty;

OR,

WHO WAS CAUGHT?

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

MAUD ECCLES had been standing, the admired center of an admiring crowd, for nearly fifteen minutes, and worshipping her from afar Clifford Kenneth watched her, with a look in his eyes that told its own story of passionate love.

He was handsome, remarkably so, yet in a refined, elegant style; he was educated, agreeably fascinating in manner—and he was worth a thousand dollars a year—a thousand dollars that was earned by daily toil over the books of a firm of tea-merchants, and not the interest of accumulated or inherited fortune.

And Maud Eccles was the oldest of two children of a millionaire; a young lady whose florist's bill alone amounted to Clifford Kenneth's salary, whose jewels cost more money than he had ever earned in his life. Maud was pretty—very pretty in a plump, girlish, rosy way that dissipation had not yet spoiled; but that time might.

And Clifford Kenneth had dared think of her as his love, his wife.

Of course it was absurdly presumptuous; but then, men have been known to perpetrate equally ridiculous mistakes; and Mr. Kenneth, standing aside from the brilliant crowd and watching the girl he loved, did not realize that the unattainable was before him.

Not that he did not perfectly understand the immense disparity in his present pecuniary condition and Maud's, but love at twenty-five is so apt to be rose-colored and hopeful, and with his admirable position he now occupied, his perfect health, his one's voice singing in the music-room had drawn nearly every other thought from his mind, and he should not, in reasonable time, rise to wealth the same as hundreds of other men had.

He watched Maud with rising pulse and eager eyes—she was so sweet and fair, and so many times had she given him reason to hope—so many times had he caught her blushing gaze—surely, surely, Maud would be true to her young heart and admit what he felt was true—that she loved him.

He had come to her house, resolved to put his fate to the touch that night; and when the sound of some one's voice singing in the music-room had drawn nearly every other thought from his mind, and he should not, in reasonable time, rise to wealth the same as hundreds of other men had.

He turned eagerly toward her.

"It is Christie, my little pet whom I used to dance with, and kiss when I chose! Shall we begin where we left off, Miss Christie?"

His glad admiration was all over his handsome face.

Christie laughed and flushed.

"So far as the part first of the programme is concerned I've not the least objection. They are playing a redowa now, Mr. Kenneth! Do you remember our last dance together?"

She took his arm as they went off to the music-room.

"Have I forgotten it? Or how you told me you liked me afterward! It is to be hoped you will be as kind in your reward after this redowa is over."

That delicate, shy little flush made her inexpressibly lovely, he thought, and he took her in his arms for the dance with a quickening of his pulse and a thrill of delight he thought never to experience again.

A fortnight later, he found her haunting through her father's conservatory one evening—she was a most welcome guest to others than fair Christie.

"Come, let's talk, little Golden-hair—I used to call you Golden-hair, you remember?"

She laughed, with her sweet face drooped away from him as one hand rested lightly on his arm.

"You have a most excellent memory, Mr. Kenneth! Suppose I tell you that I remember gravely telling you I wanted a doll-eared-riage for a philopona present, and actually cried for a week when I found you had gone 'for good' and given me no opportunity to win it?"

He pressed the round arm closely to him as she sauntered on—among the very aisles and dusky shades where he had told Maud he loved her.

"I remember perfectly every word my little girl pet ever said to me! Christie! I want her to say something else to me that I shall remember with thankfulness and joy all my life. Will she tell me she loves me? Darling, darling! you promised me a present if I caught you—I have caught you in Cupid's meshes—I want yourself, my sweet, my love!"

A silence, while the fountain plashed silver, and the pearly water trickled musically over the rocks; while two hearts were throbbing in fierce tumult of happiness.

And then Christie lifted her sweet face.

"Oh, Mr. Kenneth, it is too blessed to be true! I have always, always loved you, and if you will take me—"

you summing. I are dot it in my pottet—Hawwy dived it to me!"

She carefully took from her tiny pocket a huge peanut and broke it in halves.

"There, you take half, and I take half, and we'll bofe eat 'em. And it'll be philopona, and whoever says philopona first, after to-night, must div a present to the unwer one! Do you know what I want if I tatch you Mr. Tenneth? A dreat bid tawriage for my doll."

Somehow, the child's prattle sounded inexpressibly restful to him, after that heartless-ness of her sister, and yet the innocent mention of the time when one of them should say "philopona" after to-night, smote him with dull, cold pain. Would he ever see her or her fair, cold-hearted sister again?

Then he kissed little Christie good-night, assuring her he should be on his guard against her, and took the peanut and went away—to a long, dully painful fight against a love he was determined should not conquer him and wreck his life.

With such determination as Clifford Kenneth took to his task, men and women invariably succeed in their efforts. And he was no exception. It took hard fighting, resolute endurance, and stubbornness not to give up to the pleadings of heart against head; and at length he came out victorious; at last he came to be able truthfully to say that it was best for him that he had had the discipline.

And just at this crisis of his life, when he had not seen Maud Eccles for nearly two years, nor even caught a glimpse of Christie's golden hair, he was sent abroad by his firm on delicate, important business, that took him years from home and associations—so many years that when at length he returned to New York city he was a grave, matured man of forty, handsomer than even in young days, and with a balance at his banker's that would have put to blush the fortune of the man for whom Maud Eccles had so cruelly thrown him aside fifteen years before.

He was thinking of it as he was being driven in his carriage to a reception one evening, shortly after his arrival home, where, as wealthy, handsome and unmarried, he became at once the rage.

He was thinking of Maud Eccles, and wondering how she had fared, as men will think and wonder of women who once were dear to them; never once supposing that almost the first person he would see in Mrs. Casdemain's parlors would be Mrs. Henderson herself.

The contrast was vivid between them. He, in the full flush and glory of healthy, perfect manhood, bearing the marks of culture and traveled ease so becomingly. She—fat to actual obesity, with a great double chin, and red, puffy cheeks, and a general look of misery and worry.

But, it was Maud. The woman he had once loved—and he experienced an actual thrill of delight that he had escaped this mountain of flesh, as he took her big, perspiring hand.

"Is it possible, Mr. Kenneth! Really, I am not surprised you almost fail to recognize me, but I've no difficulty in finding my old friend in you."

Of course he had to say something about being delighted, and then—the very sweetest-faced girl he ever had seen in his life came up to him—a tall, slender girl with thoughtful, yet joyous eyes, that were dark and beaming, with exquisite golden hair brushed off a low, fair brow, a girl who never by any physical possibility could become such a mammoth as the lady beside them.

"I don't believe Mr. Kenneth remembers me, Maud, and I attribute it entirely to the shocking way he once ate philopona with me, and then left me with no chance to redeem it."

He turned eagerly toward her.

"It is Christie, my little pet whom I used to dance with, and kiss when I chose! Shall we begin where we left off, Miss Christie?"

His glad admiration was all over his handsome face.

Christie laughed and flushed.

"So far as the part first of the programme is concerned I've not the least objection. They are playing a redowa now, Mr. Kenneth! Do you remember our last dance together?"

She took his arm as they went off to the music-room.

"Have I forgotten it? Or how you told me you liked me afterward! It is to be hoped you will be as kind in your reward after this redowa is over."

That delicate, shy little flush made her inexpressibly lovely, he thought, and he took her in his arms for the dance with a quickening of his pulse and a thrill of delight he thought never to experience again.

A fortnight later, he found her haunting through her father's conservatory one evening—she was a most welcome guest to others than fair Christie.

"Come, let's talk, little Golden-hair—I used to call you Golden-hair, you remember?"

She laughed, with her sweet face drooped away from him as one hand rested lightly on his arm.

"You have a most excellent memory, Mr. Kenneth! Suppose I tell you that I remember gravely telling you I wanted a doll-eared-riage for a philopona present, and actually cried for a week when I found you had gone 'for good' and given me no opportunity to win it?"

He pressed the round arm closely to him as she sauntered on—among the very aisles and dusky shades where he had told Maud he loved her.

"I remember perfectly every word my little girl pet ever said to me! Christie! I want her to say something else to me that I shall remember with thankfulness and joy all my life. Will she tell me she loves me? Darling, darling! you promised me a present if I caught you—I have caught you in Cupid's meshes—I want yourself, my sweet, my love!"

A silence, while the fountain plashed silver, and the pearly water trickled musically over the rocks; while two hearts were throbbing in fierce tumult of happiness.

And then Christie lifted her sweet face.

"Oh, Mr. Kenneth, it is too blessed to be true! I have always, always loved you, and if you will take me—"

How NICE!—Ten years ago a handsome young man passed through Monticello, Ky., and was noticed by a young girl, sitting at the window of the most aristocratic house of the town. She fell in love with him at first sight. She had wealth, culture and beauty. He was poor, and was then on his way to seek fortune as a cattle-herder in Texas. After many ups and downs, he found himself the owner of a silver mine in New Mexico. The girl bloomed into a rarely beautiful woman. She learned who the unconscious object of her fancy was, and they corresponded throughout the ten years. She never wrote a word of her personal attractions or feelings. A few weeks ago he wrote her proposing marriage, and soon followed his letter to her home, where he saw her for the first time. Recently they were married, and Miss Annie Perry, that was, learned, on reaching Silver City, that her husband, R. B. Motcalf, was the greatest capitalist in New Mexico.

ONLY A FLOWER.

BY ALBERT E. AVERY.

Nothing, no, nothing but leaves;
Only a little earthly flower.
Knowing no pain nor sorrow,
Happy but for a single hour.
Only a fairy casket,
Filled with rich perfume,
Caring not that to-morrow
All may be hidden in gloom.

Nothing, no, nothing but leaves,
Only looking may best;
Midst the million of workers,
Only a welcome guest.
Only to bathe in sunshine,
For one short, sweet hour;
Then to die and wither—
Only a faded flower.

Oh, to be nothing but leaves,
Brings never a sigh from me;
While I see toiling workers
From weariness never free.
Rather be nothing but leaves,
Than to gain a king's renown;
If only through work and worry,
I'm to wear a royal crown.

A Girl's Heart;

OR,

DR. TREMAINE'S WOOING.

BY RETT WINWOOD.

AUTHOR OF "THE WRONGED HEIRESS," ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

SPINNING THE DEVIL'S YARN.

RACHEL came down-stairs looking so pale and wan, the next morning, that even Mrs. Heathcliff grew solicitous.

"I fear you are not happy with us, my child," she said, speaking quite kindly. "If that is so, you have only to tell my husband. I know he would not detain you here against your wish."

"It is not that," answered Rachel, eagerly; "indeed it is not."

Grace was standing near, and a wicked smile curled her beautiful lips. But she said nothing.

Colonel Heathcliff, too, observed the change in Rachel, and his languid blue eyes grew strangely troubled in their expression as he fixed them upon her face.

"You are losing your roses," he said, gently. "Is it I who am stealing them away from you?"

"Oh, no, no!"

"What then? Is Fairlawn like a cage, that you beat your wings against its bars?"

"No," she answered, softly. "I think I could be very happy here. I do not wish to go away while you need me."

He laughed softly to himself, and said, after a pause:

"Then you will remain here forever; but you must not make yourself ill nursing me. I shall not permit that."

Then, beckoning his wife to approach, he added:

"I am going to send you both out for a walk. Take my word for it, you will come back refreshed."

Mrs. Heathcliff bit her lip, and looked slightly displeased, but she instantly rang for her hat and scarf.

"My husband knows how to be very tyrannical, Miss Clyde," she said, with a forced laugh. "We might as well yield at once."

She moved toward the door, waiting for Rachel to follow. The girl arose with extreme reluctance. She would much rather have remained.

Mrs. Heathcliff was in a very gracious mood. She began talking glibly when they were once in the open air. She selected the most public walks, and seemed determined to extract the full enjoyment from the beautiful morning.

Presently a man turned into the walk from one of the side paths. He came straight toward them. Of course they had met scores of other men already during their brief ramble, but, somehow, this one excited Rachel's curiosity.

Mrs. Heathcliff was walking with her eyes fixed upon the ground. Though the man was coming straight toward them, and walking in a hurried, nervous manner, calculated to excite suspicion, she took no notice of him until they came face to face.

Then she glanced up quickly, and came to a sudden stand still. Her features grew convulsed, and she bit her lip fiercely. Some spasm of pain or fear or anguish seemed to shake her whole body.

"You?" she cried out, sharply.

The exclamation was involuntary—wrung from her in the surprise and confusion of the moment. The man shrugged and smiled.

Yes, Mrs. Heathcliff, he replied, calmly. "You were not expecting me?"

She rallied a little, stepped forward, and laid her hand on his arm.

"Tell me, Edward Dent," she demanded, "what brings you here?"

He hesitated, glancing back at Rachel—a glance in which admiration and curiosity were singularly blended.

"This young lady is a stranger to me, Mrs. Heathcliff. Excuse me if I am not communicative in her presence."

These words were spoken in a suppressed voice. But softly as they were uttered, Rachel caught them distinctly. She looked fixedly at the man a moment, then a shiver shook her frame.

He was a great, loutish, ungainly fellow, with ridiculously long limbs, a thin, dark face, and a pair of small, twinkling, deep-set eyes, that burned under their bushy black brows like globes of fire. Rachel shrank from him with an instinctive feeling of repugnance.

Mrs. Heathcliff had seen the man's admiring look, as well as the look with which Rachel answered it. She smiled softly to herself, and said:

"Mr. Dent, permit me to present my young friend and protégé, Miss Rachel Clyde."

The man started perceptibly. He gave Mrs. Heathcliff a quick glance, as if to assure himself she was not trifling with him. Then he doffed his hat somewhat awkwardly.

"I'm sure this is a pleasure, miss," stammered he. "It's always pleasant to meet anybody so young and beautiful. Besides, I know you—"

"Hush!" cried Mrs. Heathcliff, sharply.

She stopped quickly between the two.

"Rachel," she added, speaking in a tone of suppressed excitement, "I think we have walked far enough. Shall we turn back?"

"I do please, madam."

"Do please, I'm tired and out of sorts. I couldn't go a step further."

She turned, snatching Rachel's hand as she did so, and literally dragging her along the path by which they had come.

Two or three long strides brought the man she had called Edward Dent to her side again. He looked down at her with a disagreeable smile.

"This is not the way old friends should meet or part, Mrs. Heathcliff," and he grinned, sarcastically.

She drew a quick breath, growing quite pale with anger and terror.

"Forgive me," she faltered. "I am not well."

"Humph! Perhaps you are well enough to invite me to Fairlawn."

"To Fairlawn?"

"Yes, I am anxious to quarter myself there for the present. Nay, don't make any apologies. I am quite ready to take up with such accommodations as you have to offer."

He ended with another of those disagreeable smiles. Mrs. Heathcliff shook from head to foot. But, with a strength of will worthy a better cause, she turned, after a brief silence, saying graciously:

"Of course you are very welcome. Pardon me for not having offered the hospitalities of Fairlawn sooner."

Then she fell back a little, signing for him to follow her example. The instant Rachel had passed beyond the reach of their voices she said, between her shut teeth:

"What do you mean by coming here, and forcing yours if upon us?"

"I came," he answered, with a sneer, "because it was my pleasure, and because a certain person in whom we are both interested is lurking somewhere in this neighborhood."

Mrs. Heathcliff started, stared wildly, and cried, with a shiver in her voice:

"Impossible! He is not here?"

"I have every reason to believe that he is. He disappeared suddenly from his old haunts, at least, and we could find no trace of him."

"Would he dare come this way?"

"He would dare anything. Such another reckless devil I never saw. Of course I saw the necessity of following him."

"Of course," she echoed, and then relapsed into silence.

"As to forcing myself upon you," he added, presently, "to whom could I go in this emergency, save to my very dear friend, Mrs. Heathcliff?"

She suddenly clasped her fingers over her temples.

"My husband," she murmured. "What shall I say to him? How explain your presence in the house?"

"Humph! That is your concern. You can say I am some relative, if you wish. I shall not contradict you."

She hesitated, gave him a quick, half-impugning glance, and finally said:

"Why will you go to Fairlawn? There are hotels in the neighborhood. You might stop at one of those."

"I would rather not," he answered, shrugging—an odd light coming into his flashing black eyes. "I have a reason for wishing to remain undisturbed under your roof."

"What reason?"

His glance swept forward, rested upon Rachel's trim, elegant figure an instant, and then he replied:

"Love!"

Mrs. Heathcliff started as if she had been struck. She stared stupidly at him.

"Impossible!"

"It is true," he said, coolly. "I don't wonder you are surprised. It's a case of love at first sight. Such things do happen, even at my time of life. Miss Clyde is pretty as a picture. I'm really quite smitten with her."

He was dead in earnest—there could be no doubt of that. Mrs. Heathcliff looked thoughtful. She clasped and unclasped her hands several times, in a nervous manner. At last she turned to her companion with an expression of unmistakable relief upon her face.

"Good!" she exclaimed. "I believe I'm glad you have taken a fancy to the girl. It will save me a world of trouble, perhaps, for I know you will never dare to play me false. You shall marry her!"

"Shall I?" he laughed. "Perhaps she will not marry me."

"She shall be made to marry you," answered Mrs. Heathcliff, compressing her thin lips sternly.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HEART'S CRY.

MR. EDWARD DENT was installed at Fairlawn as an honored guest. Colonel Heathcliff made no attempt to conceal his surprise at the visit, but he treated him with uniform courtesy and politeness.

"You will find Edward very eccentric," Mrs. Heathcliff had said to her husband, at the outset. "But I know you will be kind to him for my sake."

"Certainly," the colonel made answer. "You say he is a relative?"

She hesitated, flushed a little, and replied: "A cousin, on my mother's side."

"I never heard you speak of him."

"No. I used to see him sometimes, when a child. But we had not met for many years. I had almost forgotten him."

Colonel Heathcliff looked thoughtful.

"I hope he has not degenerated in any of these years," he said, after a pause.

"I don't know. I can only tell you that he is very rich. He seems to have made money rapidly. He may leave it all to Grace if we are kind to him."

"True, my dear. You may rest assured I shall do nothing to blast Grace's hopes in that direction."

And so Mr. Edward Dent, in spite of his innate coarseness and vulgarity, and the suspicious suddenness of his appearance among them, became domiciled in the household.

Perhaps Rachel was the only person who really suffered because of his presence in the house. But his manner toward herself filled her with alarm and uneasiness.

He rarely sought the chamber where Colonel Heathcliff still lay, rapidly recovering from his bruises. But the girl could not stir outside the sacred precincts of that room without encountering him.

He followed her into the garden, if she went there for a breath of fresh air or a little exercise. If she sought the music-room, he was by her side in an instant. In the spacious parlors she could never be free from the annoyance of his presence.

The nature of his attentions could scarcely be mistaken. He was ludicrously devoted and over-zealous, considering the shortness of their acquaintance. Rachel was not even civil to him, for she could not conceal the disgust and abhorrence he inspired.

The girl would have been very unhappy but for the pleasure she experienced in Colonel Heathcliff's society and attending upon his wants.

Dr. Tremaine came to Fairlawn frequently. But a strange coldness had crept into his manner toward Rachel. He manifested a reluctance to seek her society that cut her to the heart.

One day he came in and found her alone in the drawing-room. With ordinary politeness, he could do no less than linger to say a few words to her. In the midst of their conversation the door was thrust open, and Mr. Dent looked in.

"Ah!" he said, frowning a little, at sight of Dr. Tremaine. "You are engaged, Miss Clyde? I have something particular to say to you."

His manner gave emphasis to his words. He advanced slowly into the apartment. Rachel grew very white, and clung involuntarily to the arm of her companion.

"Take me away," she whispered. "To the garden—anywhere—so that we escape that man!"

Dr. Tremaine's arm slid about her waist. He led her toward the door, looking very stern and resolute.

"Let us pass, if you please," he said, for Mr. Dent had halted directly in their way.

The man hesitated an instant. Something of rage and hatred mingled in the dark valley of his countenance. But he caught the sudden fire that leaped into Dr. Tremaine's eyes, and wisely drew back.

"Certainly, sir," he said, with an awkward bow. "I did not know you were going out."

"We are."

He knitted his brow, and returned, speaking in a very low voice:

"I must beg an interview with Miss Clyde when she is at liberty."

Dr. Tremaine passed out, making no response. He led Rachel to the conservatory. The door stood open, and she looked so white and frightened that he dared take her no further.

"You are ill," he said, gently, drawing up a stool in the shadow of the vines. "We will wait here until you are better. Or do you wish me to summon assistance?"

clenched her teeth involuntarily. It was impossible to mistake the meaning of that scene. For an instant she leaned giddily against the wall, with the mask torn utterly from her pallid face, and her secret soul laid bare.

Then she rallied. Forcing a smile to her lips she advanced a little further into the conservatory.

Around her was fragrance and beauty and riotous bloom; green vines trailing from pillars and arches; flowers bursting into gorgeous bloom, with the summer sunlight lying warm and golden over all.

She could never bear the sight of flowers after war, and some odors turned her sick.

"Pardon me," she said, softly. "I thought the conservatory was deserted."

Dr. Tremaine held out his hand.

"I came to make my customary call, Miss Atherton," he said, with grave dignity. "I am glad to have met you."

She bowed in acknowledgment, looked hard at Rachel, who sat pale and quivering in the shadow of an oleander, and knitted her brows, as if at a loss whether to go or stay.

Rachel saved her the trouble of a decision by rising abruptly, and moving away with a slow, uncertain step.

Grace called after her:

"Mr. Dent is waiting for you. You will find him in the front parlor. I promised to send you to him."

Rachel's reply was inarticulate. She closed the door and fled across the hall and up the stairs, never pausing to take breath until she had reached her own room, and the door was securely locked against all intruders.

Then she flung herself on the couch sobbing and wringing her hands as if her very heart would break.

"It is all over," she moaned. "Dr. Tremaine will think me cold and ungrateful, and oh, my heart is bursting with the wretchedness of it all!"

She scarcely thought of Mr. Dent, except to wonder how she could best avoid him.

Grace, meanwhile, was standing under a delicate arch of vines, covertly scanning Dr. Tremaine's grave face, and idly pulling a rose to pieces.

She was wondering just how far his wooing had gone, and what had been the result of it.

"Indeed!" he answered, coldly.

"Yes, Mr. Dent is quite infatuated. He follows her like a shadow. And even papa Heathcliff thinks her incomparable."

She paused for a reply, but as none came, she added:

"You are as familiar as I am with the events of that night when she met the stranger in the garden. Of course he was a lover. I wonder, Dr. Tremaine, lifting her eyes with an arch, penetrating glance, "if you will not be the next victim."

He smiled and shrugged.

"Forewarned is forearmed," Miss Atherton said.

She bit her lip. This was scarcely the answer she had expected.

"I hope you don't think I am warning you against Miss Clyde?" she exclaimed.

"Oh, no," with another shrug, that puzzled her more than the first bad done.

"It was only an unlucky jest. Forget it. I admire Rachel quite as much as anybody else does."

Then she changed the subject abruptly, and fell to talking of other things. But Dr. Tremaine did not linger many minutes. Though a woman of rare beauty and fascination, she had not the power to hold him at her side.

She felt this, and stood, fairly livid with rage, by the hall window, watching his departure.

"Has it come to this?" she hissed, through her close-set teeth. "Have I really given my taken, with all its richness of affection, unsought, unwelcome?"

It was a terrible reflection for the haughty beauty.

Suddenly a step stirred beside her. Looking round, she met Mr. Dent's thin, smearing face bent close to her own.

"It isn't pleasant to love, and love in vain," he said, smiling disingenuously.

She retreated a step or two, flashing him a haughty glance.

"Do you speak from your own experience, Mr. Dent?"

"Perhaps," he answered, biting an angry lip. "Let us console with each other."

"Excuse me, I have no occasion."

He laughed aloud.

"Excuse me, Miss Atherton; but I happen to know better."

"Sir!" she cried, with a stamp, and gleaming eyes.

He stood before her quite still, but with a cruel smile upon his lips. He seemed nowise daunted by her anger.

"Compose yourself, my dear. It is not of the slightest use to fall into a passion with me."

She gasped for breath. "Insolent!" she exclaimed. "How dare you! I'll tell papa Heathcliff. He will order you from the house."

"Take my advice, and speak to your mother in the first place. I will leave Fairlawn any moment that she sees fit to dismiss me."

His coolness exasperated her. It was the coolness of conscious power. And there was something alarming in his words themselves. She had half suspected that he had some hold upon her mother. Now she was sure of it.

She tried to compose herself; but her face was white, and she trembled a little. It seemed terrible to be at the mercy of this coarse, cruel man.

"Tell me what you mean by following me here!" she demanded.

His eyes fixed themselves upon her face in sharp close scrutiny.

"To console with you. I knew the state of your affections; and I wished to give you an assurance."

"What assurance?"

"Dr. Tremaine will never marry Rachel Clyde."

She started, to her wild stare he replied with a low laugh.

"Who is to prevent?" she asked.

"I am."

"How?"

"That is my secret. Ask me no questions. You will know soon enough. Only be assured that I have spoken well."

He turned slowly, moved to a little distance, and then came back again.

"Where is Rachel?" he demanded.

"She went up-stairs, I think."

"Could you send her to me?"

"I doubt if she would come."

"True."

He looked down at her, frowning darkly. At last he burst into a hoarse laugh.

"Rachel has a will of her own," he muttered.

ed. "No matter. I admire a woman of spirit. I can bide my time."

Grace shivered with a chill, but finally found voice to ask:

"What will you do?"

"Marry the girl myself, and so take her out of harm's way for good."

He rubbed the palms of his hands together, chuckling softly to himself, as he said this. Grace felt the very blood in her veins run cold, he looked so dark, stern, diabolical—a very Lucifer.

His presence made her nervous. She could endure it no longer. Turning, she fled swiftly up the stairs.

"Heaven pity poor Rachel if she falls into that man's clutches," she murmured, her heart melting in momentary pity.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 378.)

L'ENNUYER.

BY MARY E. HERWITT.

They are springing on the brook-side,
They are springing on the hill;
The daisies, and the buttercups,
And the yellow daffodil.

It were a pleasant thing to see
The roving wild bee pass,
And the golden-winged butterfly
Skim o'er the waving grass.

And to hear the merry blackbird
Amid the branches sing,
And the many, many glad-tones
The morning breeze bring.

Lament at thou not, kind neighbor tree,
The day they placed thee here!
Where the very rain falls fast
Through the pent-up atmosphere—

Where the only living thing that pipes
These close-built walls among,
Is the lonely, aged canary-bird
At yonder casement hung.

Thy brethren of the greenwood,
Ere our dawns were well begun,
Lift up their shining, dowy leaves
To greet the morning sun.

But we may watch his rising
All wistfully, in vain;
Till he peeps above the chimney-tops,
And glances on the pane.

I am panting, like the weary hart,
For bright and flowing streams;
And the pastures where I wander
In my pleasant, pleasant dreams.

And the green tree rustled then its leaves,
And softly seemed to say,
"I shade the good man's dwelling
Through the long, long summer day."

"I know the flowers are springing
On the grassy hillside fair,
Where my brethren wave their idle limbs
In the blossom-scented air."

"But the good man sits beneath my leaves,
And wipes his heated brow,
And blesses of the cooling shade
Of my overhanging bough."

"He will prop with care my aged trunk,
He'll miss me when I fall—
Had I lived a selfish forest life,
I had ne'er been missed at all."

I heed thy kind reproving,
Thou wise and useful tree;
So may I unrepining fill
The lot appointed me.

THE GIGANT RIFLEMAN:
OR,
WILD LIFE IN THE LUMBER REGIONS.

BY OLL COOMES.
AUTHOR OF "SURE-SHOT SETH," "DAKOTA DAN,"
"RED ROB, THE BOY ROAD-AGENT," ETC.

CHAPTER XII.—CONTINUED.

"NOWADAYS," continued Spencer, "we all go well-dressed. You can see that I had a man, red or white, saint or sinner, but what carries a revolver or rifle."

"It seems to me, that if the proper steps are taken, you can rid your country of this assassin; for nothing of the material world could elude you always."

"Very true, Mr. Earl; but you know not what a class of people we have in the pinneries. Such an air of mystery surrounds this assassin that it has filled nearly every man with superstition and fear. A man may be brave and outspoken in the sunlight; but let him step into the shadows of the woods alone where his own foot-falls sound ghostly, and you will see his eyes dilate, his form assume a position of stealth and caution, and his head bend in an attitude of intense listening. Yes, Mr. Earl, shadows are the lurking place of danger—darkness the home of Death."

Mr. Earl felt the force of his companion's assertion, and for awhile remained silent.

"They rode on and finally arrived at the Points. Mr. Earl did not stop, but pursued his homeward journey."

Captain Spencer dismounted, ordered his horse stable, and then entered the bar of the Free Pitch Inn.

There were none present but the innkeeper, for it was still early morn.

The two at once entered into an animated conversation which lasted some minutes, when it was interrupted by the entrance of a man carrying a long-barreled rifle and a leather pouch.

This new-comer was Sandy Gray, the mail-carrier, who was greeted by Captain Spencer with an invitation to walk up to the bar and "comfort."

Sandy having no objection to a dram, readily accepted; and stepping up to the bar, drank to the captain's health. This was frequently repeated, the captain always taking a double draught; so that in a short time he began to feel the effects of it.

Presently another individual, wearing a meek look upon his face, entered the room and deposited a leather bag upon the counter of the post-office department. This man was Gershom Bland, the Quaker mail-carrier to Barkopolis.

"Ho, Gershom, my good man!" exclaimed the captain; "I am really glad to meet you."

There seems in a better humor than when they were in Pokahgan's camp the other night," replied Gershom, with a bland smile.

"Yes, I am feeling better," returned the lumberman, "for you know our bear-hunt terminated rather disastrously. I hope the next hunt I go on will be for that infernal marksman that killed Kruger."

"If I ever get my eyes on him I'll make peace with him, now mind."

"There are of a sinful nature, friend Spencer. I can't help it, Gershom; but say, come up here and be comforted, won't you?"

"Verily, captain, it is against my principle to partake of liquor."

"I know it is, on general principles, Gershom; but since you are feeling fatigued and warm, I assure you it will do you good."

"Art thee morally certain of what thee says?" asked Gershom, glancing at the brimming glass as if arguing a point in his mind.

"I know it, Gershom," answered Spencer.

"Then, peradventure, I will taste of the ungodly stuff with thee, that I may be better acquainted with its nature so as to warn others."

The latter received it with an unctuous smile, placed the glass to his lips, and with an evident groan of distress, drank the whole at a single gulp.

"Verily, it is abominable stuff," he said, wiping his lips, and turning away; "it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder." Ay,

here comes friend Obed Smiley, a teacher of Mennonite faith, whose scruples are very strict. Friend Obed, I greet thee with good wishes."

"Joy thee, friend Gershom," was the reply of the Mennonite teacher, as he entered the room and stood his gun on the floor, then extended his broad palm to the Quaker.

"Hal hal!" laughed Spencer. "I notice, Obed, that you and Gershom seem to have a regularity to have a social time. Who says Sunday-school folks don't like their toddy?"

"We culture sociability," replied Obed, avoiding the captain's eyes as though he feared them; "it is a religious duty we take a pride in. Peace on earth and good will to men is our beacon light."

"But don't you seek a little of that peace in a quiet 'bumpet'?" questioned the lumberman.

"Never, never!" replied the Mennonite, disdainfully. "I have resided at Alleghan and upon the front at long years, and have yet to look on wine when it is bad."

"But you seem to lose sight of one religious scruple in your close adherence to another. Does not your faith disapprove of violence and bearing arms?"

"It does, friend Spencer; but I carry a gun for self-protection, and use it then only when moral suasion fails in its good power. Moreover, it has been decreed by the people as advisable for all to go armed to protect himself from that steppe-fox who respects no color—no religion—to wit, the Unknown Marksman. But I have never had occasion to raise my gun against man or beast."

"Amen," exclaimed Gershom, in a lugubrious tone.

"You're mistaken, Obed; the marksman has never killed a woman nor a Quaker," said Spencer.

"So much to his credit," added Obed.

"Wal, boys," chimed in Sandy Gray, "you may stick to your faith chus as a leech; but mind what I tell ye, old Sandy'll shoot whenever he gets a chance—ye, thank ye, and I'll drink too."

The lumberman had ordered drinks for four, and invited Sandy, Gershom and Obed to partake.

"Verily, friend Spencer," said Gershom, "I have already pronounced my aversion to the abominable stuff, and so I must refuse thee on principle."

"Amen!" shouted Obed.

"Obed," said the captain, "you say you cultivate sociability; now, wherein would there be any harm in you Christians taking a glass with Sandy and I? Do you wish to cut my friendship by refusing?"

"No, friend Spencer," replied Obed, "but even if I were so predisposed, a feeling akin to a violent cramp in the stomach would prevent my drinking."

"There's nothing in the world better for colic than just whisky," said Spencer.

"No, nothing," said Phil Strahl.

"Nothing, ah!" asked Obed, in surprise; "then I will take a measure to try its medicinal properties, for I suffer a great deal with cramps in the stomach."

"And verily, it is a wise old saw that says: 'An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,'" said the Quaker, advancing to the bar; "and, peradventure, I will try the virtue in the sinful stuff in counteracting the influence of the malaria along my route."

And so the four took the glasses and lifted them to their lips. The Mennonite sipped at his and grimaced as though it were liquid torture; while the Quaker closed his eyes, tipped the glass, and let the liquor run down his throat with apparent relish.

As they replaced the glasses on the counter, Gershom said:

"Sinful stuff—the beverage of Satan. What say thee, friend Obed?"

"Amen," was the solemn response.

A tinny clatter of the Free Pitch Inn were startled by a horseman, who dashed up to the door of the tavern, hatless and terrified—his horse covered with foam and panting with exhaustion.

"My God, Jubal Osgood!" exclaimed Captain Spencer, running out into the yard; "what's wrong? What's the matter, man?"

"Captain," the man fairly gasped, as he sat half turned in the saddle, gazing back along the route he had come as if fearing pursuit. "Joe Wiltz is dead! He was shot dead at my side, as we were coming down the road, by that Unknown Marksman! And that's not all; I saw that dreaded being—that terrible scourge of the—"

"What, you say—?"

"The Unknown Marksman—stood face to face with him! Oh, Lord, captain!"

"And the man shook in the saddle as if with an ague chill."

"HE COMES!"—THE DREAD UNKNOWN!
An hour after Jubal Osgood arrived with the startling news of Joe Wiltz's death at the hands of the Unknown Marksman, fifty or more persons had assembled at the Five Points. Nearly half of Spencer's men were there—the rest of the crowd being composed of a few French Canadians from Bertraw's camp, and a few whites and Indians from Alleghan, who had come to witness the sports of the day.

Joe Wiltz's death was entirely lost sight of in the excitement that prevailed over the death of Wiltz, and the presence of that unknown scourge so close to the Points.

Jubal Osgood, for the time being, became the chief center of attraction. He was impetuous upon every side for a description of the dread enemy, and growing tired of describing him to every man, he finally mounted the horse-block in front of the inn and said:

"Gentlemen, you all seem desirous of knowing what the Unknown Marksman looks like; therefore I'll tell ye all together. Wiltz and I were coming down the river road toward this place, conversing 'bout the foot-race, and so forth. We were 'bout two miles from here when a rifle in the bushes before us rang out, and a bullet whizzed past my ear. I turned my head and saw him reel on his horse, and as he fell, I saw a little pink spot appear on his forehead where the bullet struck. Just then his horse skinned and bounded away, and seeing I could do poor Joe no good, I put spur to beast and galloped off. I did not ridden over fifty yards from the muzzle of his gun, issued from the woods and stopped by the roadside. And such a man! One glance was enough. He was nine feet high if he was an inch, and seemed to be raising higher and higher like the head of a serpent. His beard was half as long as himself, and his eyes, I know, were as big as my fist, and glowed like balls of fire as they glared at me. I tell ye, boys, I never saw such a human being. I don't believe he is a man, but some devilish monster that'll kill us all. This, gentlemen, is what I, Jubal Osgood, saw with my own eyes; and you know now what the Unknown Marksman is."

"Verily," said Gershom Bland, who had listened with ears and mouth open, "friend Osgood is a little excited, and peradventure his eyes have deceived him."

"Nothing but a monster could kill and slay innocent people," added Sandy Gray, laying considerable emphasis upon his words.

"Obed the Mennonite."

"Thee speaks truly, friend Obed," responded Gershom, "but with perseverance thee may sail through to the harbor of eternal peace. But then I must confess fears of this ungodly assassin, since he was seen upon my route today."

"Men," shouted Spencer, "let us not stand idle here! Surely fifty men are not afraid to face one! Let us divide up into about a dozen parties and beat the woods of Michigan through and through but what we get this lurking assassin. Not one of us will be safe so long as he is permitted to run at large. I am ready to sacrifice my life, if need be, in ridding the country of this unnatural monster. If there is a man here who refuses to join in the hunt, let him step out."

"Verily, friend Spencer," said Gershom,

pushing his way through the crowd and confronting the captain, "thou know'st my religious scruples; but should the Unknown Marksman meet me on my route, perchance he would not respect a mail-carrier any more than a lumberman; nor hesitate to shoot a Friend any more than a sinner; therefore I will give thee the presence of my company, at least, in the search for the abominable creature; and peradventure I will lay violent hands on the monster should it become necessary."

"That's the talk, Gershom!" answered Spencer; then turning to the crowd, he asked: "Does any one know whether Running Deer, the Chippewa hunter, is here or not?"

He was answered by a voice in the affirmative, and the next moment the straight, lithe form of the Chippewa advanced through the crowd—moving with the cat-like grace and agility of the panther. In the hollow of his left arm he carried his double-barreled rifle; while under his right arm hung his mail-pouch. As he approached the captain, he fixed a look upon that worthy that caused him to fairly wince. Spencer never had any particular love for his intelligent and honorable young Indian, and his dislike had finally turned to fear. He believed he was as treacherous as he was subtle and cunning; yet he knew that he had no superior in all Michigan as a scout and hunter, and as their dread of the Unknown Marksman was a mutual one, he felt certain that the Indian would be worth a dozen common men on the enemy's trail.

"Running Deer," he said, addressing the young Indian, "if ever the skill of a good scout you require it is now; and to you we are all willing to concede that honor. Will you accept of the position of general scout in the great search we are about to make for the Unknown Marksman?"

Running Deer is no coward; he is willing to do anything for his friends; he replied the young mail-carrier, addressing his words to the crowd, as if he disdained speaking to Spencer.

Then I would suggest," said the captain, assuming the right to speak as leader of the party, "that you go with Osgood to the point where the assassin was seen, and see which direction he took; with this information gained, men can be deployed through the woods to surround him. Meanwhile, a party had better go along and bring in poor Wiltz's body before the wolves can attack it."

With a grim, stoical smile Running Deer signified his willingness to begin the work assigned him, and, accompanied by Osgood, and four others with litters, he set off up the river. In the mean time Captain Spencer began perfecting arrangements for a general search by dividing the crowd up into parties of four, and drafting a plan of operation.

While thus engaged Running Deer and his companions came hurrying back toward the Points, apparently in great excitement.

"Heavens!" exclaimed the captain. "I wonder what is wrong now?"

"Verily, fear has seized upon the minds of those brave men," observed Gershom, in a tone slightly sarcastic.

"I'll bet that's no ten men here that'll face that walkin' death-machine," exclaimed Sandy Gray.

"What brings you back?" exclaimed Spencer, as the men hurriedly approached.

Osgood placed his fingers to his lips significant of silence. The man evinced great fear and excitement.

A dead silence settled over the three-score of men, while three-score of eager, frightened faces looked nervously around them.

Osgood, approaching the party, said, in a low, excited tone:

"He's coming! down the road!"

"Who's coming?" asked Spencer.

"The giant—the Unknown Marksman!"

A low cry of terror escaped every lip. A convulsive shudder passed over the assembly of armed, and hitherto boastful, men. Fear became plainly written upon nearly every face.

And why?

He was coming down the road. They were soon to stand face to face with one of whom their very souls had become ingrained with fear. And this fear, engendered when each was alone, could not be dispelled now by the presence of superior numbers. Numerical power gave them no assurance of safety.

The scene was an interesting one: sixty men, apparently rooted with fear, stood still with fluttering hearts, white, quivering lips, and fixed eyes, watching for the coming of—a single man.

Had the trumpet of the archangel heralded the coming of the Judgment Day the eyes of that band could not have been more closely fixed upon the East for the coming of the Son of Man.

Gershom Bland muttered something about the shedding of blood, and edged around to the rear of the crowd. His movements seemed to have created a sort of panic, for all the rest of the crowd became affected with a desire to fall back to the rear.

Every man felt as though he would be the special victim of the dreaded foe.

A bird, fluttering up from the bushes by the roadside, was noticed by those three-score pairs of watchful eyes.

Three-score pairs of listening ears imagined they could hear the massive tread of the approaching demon.

The top of a conical cap was suddenly discovered above the tops of the bushes where it made a bend. But no wearer was yet visible.

"He comes!" whispered old Sandy, his teeth fairly chattering, and his eyes starting

may help thee in thy search for the ungodly murderer. I now feel anxious that he be seized by violent hands since he lurks along the way I pursue."

Spencer at once acted upon the suggestion of the Quaker, and liberating the stranger, restored his arms and accoutrements to him. He endeavored to make an apology for the treatment he had been instrumental in giving the giant; and the latter accepting all very calmly, quietly replied:

"I am sorry that it has required such desperate evidence to convince you of my entire innocence. I have heard of this Unknown Marksman before I came into this vicinity; but always supposed it was a name applied to the Vigilance Committee of the lumber districts. My name is Goliath Strong, and at present I am serving as guide to three young men who follow the occupation of bee-hunters, and who are encamped near Spirit Rapids. I never did aught of which I am ashamed; but if this Unknown Marksman is not your vigilante, as I supposed he was, then there is some cause for his haunting you people like an avenging Nemesis. There is no human so depraved as to scout the woods and shoot men down for the love of murder. There is something back of all this silent death-work. The Unknown Marksman, you will find yet, is an avenger; at least, this is my opinion."

"Ames," was Gershom Bland's solemn indorsement of the big hunter's words.

"This speaks like a Christian and philosopher, friend Strong," said Obed Smiley, with an unctuous acquiescence.

"Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," said Sandy Gray, in a strange tone, intended to be solemn.

Goliath Strong, the giant hunter, was permitted to depart in peace; and soon after the Five Points were deserted by those who had assembled to take part in the races and sports of the day.

Some went in search of the Unknown Destroyer, and some went home. Gershom Bland, Sandy Gray and Running Deer, each departed for his respective settlement with the mail; and Phil Small went off alone with the terrified members of his household.

Outside all was silent save the ominous creaking of the great sign-board, and the cold, stiff rustling of the pines like the robes of the dead.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 375.)

"BY THE STILL WATERS"

Don't you hear the hickory crackling?
Muffled like, and soft, and low.
Sounds just like a heart's pumping,
Only it's a sign of snow.

Here's a sinner smoldering, burning,
Drooping ashes, powerful line;
Don't be frightened, little miss,
It's a coffin, but it's mine.

Let me see the balm o' Gilead,
Wavin' by the cabin door.
I won't hear it leaves my little
In the spring, my child, no mo'!

Maybe I won't hear of bluebird
Singing in the apple trees;
But I'll hear the angels sing,
Do they have sweeter songs than these.

Hark! is that de thunder rolling?
See de forked lightning's gleam;
Many a time I've soothed my baby
When de storm disturbed her dream.

Now de drum—I hear it beatin';
Slow and solemn-like for me;
Maybe it's de angels singin',
On de shores of Galilee.

"Two'n't be dark, de stars an' shinin'
Way above de storm and rain;
Dere'll be long protracted meetin's
Campin' 'ole heaves an' plain.

Dere won't be no wailin', weepin'—
Dere won't be no day to part;
Christ will hear me when I knock dere,
He will hand de broken heart.

'Cross cold Jordan's troubled waters,
Into Canaan's land I fly;
Dere de tree of life is bloomin',
All de host an' passin' by.

Raise me up, hear de jubilee,
Angels at de cabin door;
Don't you weep for poor ole mammy,
She won't never grieve no mo'.

The Cretan Rover;

or,
ZULEIKAH, THE BEAUTIFUL.

A Romance of the Crescent and the Cross.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM.

AUTHOR OF "WITHOUT A HEART," "THE FLYING YANKEE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A STRANGE SCENE.

"AL SIRAT PASHA, YOU ARE MY PRISONER!"

The Turk started—he was confronted by Julian Delos.

"Your prisoner! Why, you but now came aboard this vessel!"

"I have said that this man, Archer Trevillian, should die also. I will unfold to you all a part of the past, and then see if there is one present who will not say that he richly merits death."

"Like myself, he is an American, and like myself he is now an officer in a foreign service. The circumstances which brought this strange coincidence about are widely different."

"In a Southern State I was born and reared—my parents being wealthy and of good family."

"My sister and myself, she three years my junior, were the only children, and when we were grown to manhood and womanhood, my parents were killed by a railroad accident, and, to my surprise, my father's will, found in his desk, made me heir to all his estates, my sister being simply left to my guardianship, and in case of my death to inherit my wealth."

"It was a strange will, and created much talk among the friends of our family; but it stood good, and I got the wealth, at the same time declaring my intention to share it equally with my sister."

"As I was absent at college until my nineteenth year, and then, on the breaking out of the civil war, went into the Confederate army, my father had as his secretary a young man who had been educated to the profession of the law; that man stands before you in Archer Trevillian."

"After the death of my parents, I still kept this man as manager of the estates, for he knew what I was worth far better than I did."

"At the close of the war I returned to my home, which had escaped destruction, and then I met a young lady in whom I became deeply interested—any, I learned to love, and a beloved that she loved me, until one evening I discovered that she was secretly engaged to a young man, one whom I had never liked."

"This was an unfortunate discovery for me, at that time, as, behaving before told me he was not interested in the lady, running to the contrary notwithstanding, I accused him of deception in the matter, and the result was a challenge from him to meet him in the duello, which challenge I accepted."

"At that time we were rehearsing for some private theatricals, gotten up by the ladies of the neighborhood, in behalf of the wounded Confederate soldiers, and they were to come off the very night following my acceptance of the challenge, and it was agreed that we would keep the matter quiet, as both my antagonist and myself were important actors in the play—nay, stranger still, we were the principals in a dueling scene that was in the piece—certainly a strange coincidence."

"To hasten on: the play was well put on the stage, and the dueling scene came, and with bitterness in our hearts we took our stands—for we felt that the morrow would usher in a real, not a sham duel between us."

"At the bottom of the sea! How do I know what becomes of favorites who have lost favor in my sight?"

"And the father—the gallant Cretan, El Estin, where is he?"

"Ask yonder ruin; it may tell the secret."

"No, no, Turk! Here is one to tell the secret."

All started at the strange voice, and suddenly the mysterious, white-clad woman glided before the Moslem chief.

Then her veil was thrown aside, and with a cry of horror upon his lips Al Sirat started back, crying:

"Holy Mahomet! Alfarida! Does the sea give up its dead?"

"Ha, ha, ha, Al Sirat—I am she who was once thy favorite, who ruled you by love's fetters—now, I am the being who has haunted yonder ruin for these long years. You tired of me because the fair Greek, Phoebe, crossed your path—you tired of me, and sent me forth one night on the Bosphorus to die; but he whom you made executioner was merciful—he spared me, and I came hither—came hither with the twin deformities you also sentenced to death, because their hideousness offended your handsome dark eyes—to this isle we came, and in yonder ruin, near my girlhood's home, have we lived—lived as the phantoms of an old crumbling temple."

"Ay, there I lived, and night after night, when the moon shone brightly, did my poor, forsaken husband come thither and commune with his sorrows. Often could I have touched him; but I would not—no, I was a poor, polluted thing—polluted by thy touch."

"But one night he came, and on the very spot where he had met you years before, he met you again—met you, and your golden scimitar drank his life's blood."

"Ah, yes, I know all, for I heard his dying words to his daughter, my daughter. You were his murderer—and now you must die by my hand."

The woman, wild in her frenzy, sprung forward, a jeweled dirk in her uplifted hand.

But a slender form glided before her—a gentle yet firm grasp withheld her, and the soft voice of Kaloolah said:

"No—you have sinned enough; do not let a human life be on your soul."

"Dirk fell to the deck, and stuck quivering in the boards, while the arms dropped, and the white, haggard, thin, yet still beautiful face turned upon Kaloolah, and the lips parted, while she breathed forth:

"My daughter—will you touch your guilty mother?"

"Mother, I forgive you all, even as my father forgave me."

With a cry of joy, a heart pent up for years in agony bursting forth in delirious delight, Alfarida threw out her arms, and the lone mother and forgiving daughter were clasped in a long embrace.

No word was said for full a minute—no one, not even Al Sirat, dare break the sacredness of that meeting with speech.

At length Kaloolah said softly:

"My father, what of him, mother?"

"He lies buried yonder—I was jealous of his body, fearful that he would be buried far away, where I dare not go, and I called my slave and we bore it away. Alas! that was a night of horror, for my faithful slave, Sulka, the twin of yonder poor creature, was slain—and we stole him away, too, and gave him burial near your father, for I dare not now call him husband."

Kaloolah gave a deep sigh; the mystery of her father's body being spirited away was solved—her mother had given him burial, and tears had been shed on his lonely grave.

"Al Sirat, do you dare ask for mercy now?" broke in the stern voice of Julian, while he and all seemed relieved, for the mystery of the old ruin was solved—its phantoms were flesh and blood.

"I will die as I have lived, fearless."

The pluck of the man won a murmur of admiration from all who heard him, while Julian continued:

"You are a brave man, though an evil one, pasha. When the moon rises from yonder sea, you shall die."

"So be it—I am ready."

"But not alone: here stands a man equally deserving of death, and he shall bear you company."

It was Paul Malvern who spoke, and he pointed toward the Turkish aide-de-camp, he whom he had called Archer Trevillian.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A LEAF FROM THE PAST.

WHILE the exciting incidents were occurring on the deck of the Silver Scimitar, the vessel was laying to, calmly rocking upon the swell of the sea.

Upon the waters swept a gentle breeze, and the sun, near its setting, cast in deep shadow the shores, and burnished brightly the grand old ruin on the cliff.

On the vessel all were calm outwardly, yet every heart throbbled wildly, even those of the surprised seamen, who gathered in groups, gazing upon the scene.

Presently Paul Malvern said, in deep earnest tones that proved he was greatly moved:

"I have said that this man, Archer Trevillian, should die also. I will unfold to you all a part of the past, and then see if there is one present who will not say that he richly merits death."

"Like myself, he is an American, and like myself he is now an officer in a foreign service. The circumstances which brought this strange coincidence about are widely different."

"In a Southern State I was born and reared—my parents being wealthy and of good family."

"My sister and myself, she three years my junior, were the only children, and when we were grown to manhood and womanhood, my parents were killed by a railroad accident, and, to my surprise, my father's will, found in his desk, made me heir to all his estates, my sister being simply left to my guardianship, and in case of my death to inherit my wealth."

"It was a strange will, and created much talk among the friends of our family; but it stood good, and I got the wealth, at the same time declaring my intention to share it equally with my sister."

"As I was absent at college until my nineteenth year, and then, on the breaking out of the civil war, went into the Confederate army, my father had as his secretary a young man who had been educated to the profession of the law; that man stands before you in Archer Trevillian."

"After the death of my parents, I still kept this man as manager of the estates, for he knew what I was worth far better than I did."

"At the close of the war I returned to my home, which had escaped destruction, and then I met a young lady in whom I became deeply interested—any, I learned to love, and a beloved that she loved me, until one evening I discovered that she was secretly engaged to a young man, one whom I had never liked."

"This was an unfortunate discovery for me, at that time, as, behaving before told me he was not interested in the lady, running to the contrary notwithstanding, I accused him of deception in the matter, and the result was a challenge from him to meet him in the duello, which challenge I accepted."

"At that time we were rehearsing for some private theatricals, gotten up by the ladies of the neighborhood, in behalf of the wounded Confederate soldiers, and they were to come off the very night following my acceptance of the challenge, and it was agreed that we would keep the matter quiet, as both my antagonist and myself were important actors in the play—nay, stranger still, we were the principals in a dueling scene that was in the piece—certainly a strange coincidence."

"To hasten on: the play was well put on the stage, and the dueling scene came, and with bitterness in our hearts we took our stands—for we felt that the morrow would usher in a real, not a sham duel between us."

"The word was given to fire, and our pistols flashed together, and, as was his place to do in the play, my antagonist fell to the floor, his part being to be mortally wounded."

"Then we all waited for him to raise himself on his arm, as the character called for, and address some dying words to me."

"We waited long and he never moved, and at length one of the acting seconds stepped forward to prompt him, thinking he had forgotten his lines."

"With horror he started back; my enemy was dead—shot through the head by a ball from my pistol."

"I will pass over the scene that followed: it begins description."

"I was arrested; the truth of the intended duel came out, and it was believed that I had purposely loaded my pistol, to save my own life on the morrow."

"I lay in a felon's cell for months, and then was brought to trial—a long, tedious trial, which resulted in my being found guilty of murder with intent to kill, and my sentence was death by hanging."

"The night before the day on which I was to be executed, a visitor came to my cell. It was my sister, and she came to save me, for she had bribed the jailer to let me escape."

"The jailer was a young man, unmarried, and one to whom I had rendered favors, and it was decided that we should fly together."

"Conscious of my own innocence, I fled from the ignominious death that threatened me—fled to a foreign land."

"Shortly after my departure Archer Trevillian, who still managed my property, made a discovery—in a secret drawer of my father's desk was found another will; this will was written after the one I had found, and divided the property equally between myself and sister, and in case of my death my share was to revert to her, and vice versa as regarded her half if she died."

"Then it was shown that I had forged the first will, for in my handwriting, several half-completed copies of the will in my favor were found among my private papers."

"A year after my flight Archer Trevillian married my sister, and became the lord of my home and estates, and from that day the remittances sent me abroad ceased; but I had sufficient to allow me to travel about, and, fond of Eastern lands, I passed much time in Greece, Turkey and Asia."

"One night, in Athens, I was set upon by an assassin, and he came near taking my life, for he gave me a deep wound in the side. In that assassin I beheld a man strangely like Archer Trevillian: yet I did not suspect him, for what could he be doing in Greece?"

"After a long illness I recovered, and drifted into Turkey once more; but my letters home were unanswered, and I gradually went down hill until I was almost starved. Nay, one night, driven to desperation by my ill-fortune, I would have taken my own life, had I not been called from the dark deed by hearing a combat with swords raging not far from me."

"Then I first met Dolos Bey, and he it was who has saved me from myself. What I am today I owe to him."

"But, enough of self. Let me now tell you of the career of this man," and Paul Malvern pointed contemptuously toward Archer Trevillian, who stood with bowed head and white face, his manacled hands clasped, his whole attitude that of one who held no hope in life.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 370.)

Base-Ball.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

THE CHAMPIONSHIP CAMPAIGN.

THE Western tour of the Eastern nines—as far as League club games go—ended May 26th, and the result for the first time in the history of the League is in favor of the East, the Boston club having won six out of their eight games with League nines, and the Hartford four out of their seven. If they can do so well on their adversaries' own ground it is reasonable to suppose that they will do better when the Western nines visit the East, and consequently a busy and exciting campaign may be expected this coming June, when the League nines make their first Eastern tour of the season.

The League club games played out W. st. the past week were as follows:

| CLUBS. | Games won. | Games lost. |
|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Boston | 6 | 2 |
| Chicago | 5 | 3 |
| Hartford | 4 | 4 |
| St. Louis | 3 | 5 |
| St. Paul | 2 | 6 |
| St. Louis | 1 | 7 |
| St. Paul | 0 | 8 |

The relative position of the nines is as follows:

| CLUBS. | GAMES WON. | GAMES LOST. |
|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Boston | 6 | 2 |
| St. Louis | 5 | 3 |
| Hartford | 4 | 4 |
| Chicago | 3 | 5 |
| St. Paul | 2 | 6 |
| St. Louis | 1 | 7 |
| St. Paul | 0 | 8 |

No one supposed that the Chicago club would occupy fourth position in the race this season, nor would the club have done so but for the lively ball experiment.

In the international arena the past week but few championship games have been played, the best being as follows:

| CLUBS. | GAMES WON. | GAMES LOST. |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| Allegheny | 5 | 3 |
| Buckeye | 4 | 4 |
| Live Oak | 3 | 5 |
| Maple Leaf | 2 | 6 |
| Tecumseh | 1 | 7 |
| Tecumseh | 0 | 8 |

The relative position of the nines is as follows:

| CLUBS. | GAMES WON. | GAMES LOST. |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| Allegheny | 5 | 3 |
| Buckeye | 4 | 4 |
| Live Oak | 3 | 5 |
| Maple Leaf | 2 | 6 |
| Tecumseh | 1 | 7 |
| Tecumseh | 0 | 8 |

Last week's play was marked by several ex-

tra average games, the most remarkable being the 5 to 4 game at Erie in which sixteen innings were played at Erie. The Hartford club had a twelve-innings game with the Buckeyes marked by a score of 2 to 6 only.

NOTES OF THE DAY.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, in reply to a correspondent, says:

"The oldest club in the country is the Olympic, of Philadelphia, organized in 1833. The Knickerbocker, of New York, were organized in 1844."

This is an error. The Olympic club played town-ball—now baseball—up to 1860. The Knickerbocker is the oldest baseball club now in existence. This is its thirty-second year of play, and they have not missed a season.

The Hartford Times calls the Hartford club the "Brooklyns," there being a Hartford club now in that city. Besides which \$5,000 has been subscribed to raise a professional team there.

The Cincinnati Enquirer of May 21st says:

"The base-ball players were surprised at the Ludlow Grounds yesterday afternoon. They had gone there for the purpose of having a quiet little game, and were willing that spectators should be admitted for twenty-five cents per head. The game had hardly commenced when Sheriff Lowe, of Covington, made his appearance with a posse of men, and arrested B. P. Short, manager of the Ludlow Grounds, and the gate-keeper. The arrest was made under a provision of the General Statutes, which forbids persons to violate the Sabbath. The arrested parties gave bail, and will have a hearing before Justice Kennedy in Covington on Wednesday."

This is a good work. It is to be hoped that the Sunday ball-playing will be stopped elsewhere. Here in New York it is against the law to play ball Sunday, and the police are ordered to arrest all found engaged in the objectionable work. The blasphemy and dirty language which mark Sunday sporting crowds are notorious.

Some fine play was shown by the Cincinnati in their games with the Boston. A dispatch to St. Louis says, in the 6 to 2 game, that:

"Bond was almost invincible, while the visitors hit Mathews rather freely, but not collectively, except in the third inning. The fielding of the home club was something remarkable, and in spite of defeat, they met with a regular ovation from the crowd. In the third inning the Boston had three men on base and none out, when Leonard's line hit to left was held by Cuthbert. He threw home to Hicks to cut off the man at third, who touched second without first touching the base. Hicks threw to Hallinan, who touched his base, and threw home to Leonard to cut off Wright, who was trying to rally. He was run out between bases by Foley and Jones. The umpire decided it only a double play, thinking Wright had touched his base after Cuthbert's catch which Wright himself acknowledged he did not. However, the next move was fielded out at first, and no runs made. In two double plays by Jones and Hicks on sharp foul tips retired the side."

This is pretty work.

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, in recently commenting on the League club nines, says:

"Ferguson also has an excellent team, and will press the Boston and St. Louis very hard; his new pitcher, Larkin, has much of the crotchety and effective of Nichols, and is, if anything, an improvement over Bond. The season will, from all appearances, be as wonderfully exciting one. With four clubs evenly matched, it is up to prove a knock-and-reek race for the pennant, and it is not likely that a decision can be made until the close."

The order of fielding skill exhibited by the League nines in their recent contests together shows Hartford in the van with but 28, St. Louis second with a total of 31, Boston being third with 33, Louisville fourth with 42, Chicago fifth with 51, and Cincinnati last with 62. In base-hit batting Louisville leads, Cincinnati being second, Boston third, and St. Louis last.

HELP for the weak, nervous and debilitated. Chronic and painful diseases cured without medicine. Electric bio and other appliances, all about them, and how to distinguish the genuine from the spurious. Book, with particulars, mailed free. Address: POLYMERIZATION GALVANIC CO., 292 Vine Street, Cincinnati, O. 380-11.

TO ADVERTISERS.

A few Advertisements will be inserted on this page at the rate of fifty cents per line, non-paired measure, nt.

ALL COMPETITORS DISTANCED!

Two Dollars' Worth of Reading for Ten Cents!

Frank Starr's New York Library.

32 PAGES QUARTO; ILLUSTRATED!

Containing the best stories ever written of Border Life, Life in the Wilderness, Mountain and Mines, Life on the Coast, Trail and River. In introducing the Strange, Wild Characters of the West, whose deeds and adventures have made them renowned in History and Fiction.

Published Semi-Monthly. Each issue a Complete Romance, and containing, besides, a liberal installment of a Super Serial story, as well as occasional sketches of wild adventures and thrilling incidents.

Not only much for the money but strong, brilliant and in every way attractive. The Series for the Times!

No. 1.—A HARD CROWD; OR, GENTLEMAN SAM'S SISTERS. By the author of "Tiger Dick." Also strong installment of CAPT. MAYNARD'S wonderful romance, "THE DEATH SHOT," OR, "TRACED TO DEATH." Now Ready.

No. 2.—THE DARE DEVIL; OR, THE WINGED WITCH OF THE SEA. By Colonel Prentiss Ingraham. Now Ready.

No. 3.—KIT CARSON, JR., THE CRACK SHOT OF THE WEST. By Buckskin Sam (Maj. Sam S. Hall). Now Ready.

No. 4.—THE KIDNAPPER; OR, THE GREAT SHAMBOLE OF THE NORTHWEST. By Philip H. Love. Ready June 30.

Sold by all Newsdealers, or sent, post-paid, to any address. Price: Ten Cents per issue; or to subscribers One Dollar and Twenty-five cents for six months (13 numbers.) Address

FRANK STARR & CO., PUBLISHERS, 41 Platt Street, New York.

Dime Serio-Comic Speaker.

A new and choice collection of original, selected and adapted laughable and enjoyable pieces for School, Exhibition and Home stage.

For sale by all newsdealers, or sent, post-paid, to any address, on receipt of price—TEN CENTS.

BEADLE AND ADAMS, PUBLISHERS, 98 WILLIAM STREET, NEW YORK.

PIANOS, 7 octave \$140, 7 1/2 \$150. Estab. 1866. OREGON, 2 octave \$45, 7 octave \$80, 9 octave \$95, 12 octave \$110. Address DANIEL P. BEATTY, 578-4-5, Washington, New Jersey.

PHOTO'S of Actresses—sentimental, etc., 10

for 25 cts.; cir. of books 3 cts. S. R. LUDDEN, E. Lincoln, Mo. 371-128 A.

30 Mixed Cards, with name, 10 cts. Samples for

A JUNE POEM.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

With roses in her hair sweet June,
With tender step and gaily,
Comes lightly wandering our ways,
And men perspire profanely.
The green has grown into the red,
The flowers are brightly blowing,
The sweetest flowers of all the train—
The cabbages, are growing.
Bright month of June, how dear it is!
The year is half-way through now—
The sweetest time of all the year,
And several bills are due now!
Soft verdure clothes the fields and hills
In emerald hues and mellow;
Far, far the loveliest of all the green—
And butter's growing yellow.
The murmur of enchanting streams
So slumberous and inviting,
To-day allures the wandering steps—
And fish are mar, shining happy times!
The sun ascends its highest light,
And days are getting longer;
A mildness spreads o'er all the earth—
Onions are getting stronger.
The sweet fruit ripens on the bough,
In sunshine warm and glowing,
Nature provides for every need—
My parsnip bed needs hoeing.
The earth one soldier's pasture seems
And smiles both warm and sunny,
And all the leaves are fully out,
As, likewise, is my money.
The wild vine climbs the favoring tree,
And blossoms in the sunning,
The odor of soft winds is borne—
Soap factories are running.
The sweet music of the happy times!
Unfolds its glorious show now,
And on it falls the sun's bright beams—
Straw hats are all the go now.
A gentle shower, and nature wears
A freshest mood surprising us,
See, everything comes springing up
And day-board, too, is rising.
The heart with joyful moods is filled,
And brightness of creation,
And one feels almost glad enough
To own a poor relation.

Schamyl, THE CAPTIVE PRINCE; OR, The Cossack Envoy.

A Story of Russian Life and Adventure.
BY LAUNCE POYNTZ,
AUTHOR OF "LANCE AND LASSO," "THE SWORD-
HUNTERS," "CAVALRY CUSTER," ETC.

L—ZISKA.

BRIGHT morning in St. Petersburg. Sky as blue as ever it was in Italy, the air still, thermometer 20° below zero, ground and buildings covered with a white sheet of snow. The broad avenue of the Newsky Perspective is crowded with sledges, all the bells ringing a mad peal of merriment. Still the sleeper sleeps on.

He arrived at the Hotel de Russie last night and registered his name as "Ziska Hoffman, Journalist, America."

With him came a big Russian friend, met on the steamer, and it is Ivan Ivanoff who is now shouting at the door.

"Come, Batushka, (little father,) if we want to see the Petrovskaya before we take the train to Moscow now is our time."

And he thundered at the door, effectually dispelling further sleep.

Ziska hurriedly dressed himself and admitted the good-natured giant.

"Now, Batushka," said Ivanoff, as he came in, "if you are a wise man you'll not take the train to-day but go out and see the sights. There is the imperial palace and the hermitage of her most blessed majesty, of glorious memory, Katin's the Great, there is the admiralty and the Petrovskaya, the great statue of our immortal czar Peter. There are the theaters, the arsenals, the churches. Surely you would never miss them. Batushka, stay a few days and we will go together."

"Well," said Ziska, smiling, "I don't know that we are in such a furious hurry, after all, and I think we might easily do worse than explore this city in company, Ivanoff. Where shall we go first?"

"To breakfast, Batushka," said Ivanoff, grinning all over his broad face. "A regular Russian breakfast is ready below, and after that we will take a sledge and enjoy ourselves. Ah, Batushka, you don't know what a change it is for me, who left Russia a poor peasant, to come back a rich merchant, able to enjoy myself and have such a friend as the American nobleman."

Ziska laughed. Before he could open his mouth full of extravagant compliments.

They went down to breakfast, and a strange way they have of eating in Russia. First Ivanoff led his friend to a sideboard.

"Now, Batushka, you must eat Russian style."

There were little saucers of sweetmeats, others of salt anchovies and caviare and little glasses of vodka. Possibly you don't know what caviare and vodka are. Caviare is the roe of the sturgeon, or rather sturgeon, a species of fish peculiar to the Volga river. Americans wouldn't like it, first time, or second either, but epicures are very fond of it.

You know Hamlet calls peculiar dainties "Caviare to the general."

Ivanoff made Ziska take first a little jam, then some salt anchovies and caviare, then a little glass of fiery vodka or Russian rye whisky.

"There, Batushka, that will give you an appetite."

The breakfast was in Russian style, with plenty of hot fat soups and stews, everything seeming to be intended to keep up the animal heat of the body.

"Now, Batushka, the sledge is at the door. Leave me to make the bargain with the blacksmith. He would take the skin from you, the little dove, the son of an animal."

A few moments later the two friends were out in the biting frosty air, and Ziska shuddered through his big ulster as he felt the intense cold. Before the door stood a long low sledge with the runners made of thick wood and turning up at both ends away from the body of the vehicle, a very different machine from the trim American cutter of Ziska's recollection. In front were three horses, the center one a powerful black, the outside horses small, wild-looking shaggy ponies.

But what a strange rig! The middle horse was in shafts, and over his collar rose a bright steel bow about two feet high, carrying three large deep-toned bells, chiming in accord with each other. The head of the horse was checked up to this bows so that he could only look straight before him. The outside animals had hardly any harness but a surcingle and traces; they were no blinkers and seemed to be perfectly free.

"Now, Batushka, jump in. Plenty of furs. Cover up warm or you may lose a hand. Now, Peter Petrovitch, poshol!"

Poshol means go on, and was one of the few Russian words Ziska had picked up before leaving St. Petersburg.

The vocabulary is handy if you ever go to Russia. It is all-sufficient for the *ishvoshishik* or drosky-driver.

Poshol! Go ahead!
Stop! Stop!
Na pravo! To the right!
Na levo! To the left!

That's all you need till you come to settle your fare, and then you want to know the numerals up to ten, so as to count coppers and rubles. All that Ivanoff saved Ziska—but he told him about the Russian money, which is very simple, as they drove along.

"You see, Batushka, you Americans have your dollars, we have our rubles. Our ruble is only worth seventy-five cents, but it counts a hun-

drod coppers. Ah yes, in the old days we had silver rubles, but now it is all paper everywhere, just like your greenbacks, and the good Lord he knows when we shall get back our old hard money."

As he spoke they were gliding over the snow down one of the broadest and handsomest streets in Europe, the renowned Newsky Prospect. In Russia broad streets are all called "prospects" like our "avenues," side streets are "outlets."

The Newsky Prospect is lined with grand houses and palaces, and runs right through the center of St. Petersburg, from the Alexandrอฟski parade-ground to the Admiralty and Winter Palace, about three miles. It is the Russian Broadway, and stretches across the wide bend of the river Neva, which winds all round the city.

To-day it is full of sledges and people all in furs, and Ziska lies back muffled up to the chin in white wolf-skin and watches the brilliant panorama with delight.

"Hullo, Ivanoff, what's that?" he asks, as a glitter of weapons ahead of him catches his eye. There are a forest of spear-points high over the confusion of sledges and the dull booming of kettle-drums is audible.

"The Cossacks of the Guard, Batushka," said his friend, proudly. "Ah, they have no such soldiers in America as those. Look at them how they ride!"

As he spoke a wild-looking man in a black fur cap and huge gray overcoat galloped by the sledge waving a short whip, and motioning to clear the way, with shouts of "Poshol von! Poshol von!" (Out of the road.) Slung at his side was his long spear, resting in the stirrup-leather, and he had a carbine and big revolver, besides a sword in his belt. He wore no spurs, but carried his whip, and alternately used it on his shaggy little horse and the heads of any of the crowd who did not obey quickly.

Behind him, at about fifty paces, came the dark column of Cossacks, all in the same dress, all with the same short stirrups and little horses, but led by one of the handsomest men Ziska had ever seen.

This officer rode a great black horse, very different from those of the Cossacks. Obviously it was of English or other blood, and its rider was very different from the squat, thickest Cossacks, with their pug-noses and big bristling beards. He was tall and slender, with a high-bred face, great dark eyes, and a long black mustache that nearly touched his breast as he rode. His oval aquiline face was dark and pale, with a thoughtful, melancholy expression. He was obviously an officer of rank, but his uniform differed from that of the Cossacks. It was all of black or green, so dark as to be nearly black, and he wore a high conical Persian cap, long frock coat to the ankles, polished riding-boots, fur pelisse and gauntlets, very long silver-mounted pistols and saber—such was the appearance of the young officer who rode, solitary and proud, at the head of the Cossack column.

"Who is he, I wonder?" mused Ziska. "That man looks as if he had a history."

"That, Batushka," said Ivanoff, eagerly. "That is young Schamyl!"

"Who is Schamyl?" asked Ziska.

"Young Schamyl, the son of the great Tcherkes chief who gave czar Nicholas so much trouble. When the old man surrendered at last, the czar treated him well and allowed him to go abroad on parole. He died at Medina only a few years ago. Well, Batushka, our czar is wise. He keeps the son of Schamyl here in the capital as an officer of his own staff, and he is a prince among princes. He ought to be happy."

"He does not look so," thought Ziska. "At that moment the young Circassian prince passed close to the sledge, and as he passed he looked at the American."

Involuntarily Ziska Hoffman raised his hand and saluted young Schamyl. The prince looked surprised, but returned the salute with a grave dignity of demeanor that impressed the American very favorably, to all appearance.

As he passed on, Ziska observed to Ivanoff: "You may think that man is happy, but to my mind he looks like a prisoner planning to escape. Your czar may be wise, but he'd better watch his hostages."

The Russian merchant laughed.

"We can trust the czar, Batushka. Look; they have passed, and here we are at the admiralty. Peter Petrovitch has good horses. That fellow in the middle is a true Orloff trotter. See him step out."

Indeed Ziska was surprised at the way in which the sledge was whirled through the street, the big horse in the middle throwing out his feet in a long slashing trot that would not have disgraced Dexter, while the shaggy Ukraine ponies on the outside were at full gallop. It was a singular but quite prepossessing team, and essentially Russian.

At a signal from Ivanoff the sledge stopped near the Admiralty, a great gray granite building; and the travelers had a full view of the celebrated equestrian statue of Peter the Great, the horse rearing at the edge of a precipice formed by a huge block of granite forty feet high. Before them was the frozen sheet of the Neva, and at the other side of the Admiralty rose the enormous pile of the Winter Palace, leading to the so-called "Hermitage" of Catherine II, the cottage that cost twenty millions of dollars.

Ziska was still looking round him, lost in wonder and admiration, when he felt a hand on his shoulder. He started. A Cossack on horseback was by the sledge and handed him a little white note. Before he could open it the man saluted and rode away, leaving Ziska puzzled beyond measure.

(To be continued.)

Captain Saul's Victory.

BY C. D. CLARK.

"He broke the token, and half he gave to me, while the other's rolling—while the other's rolling—"

At the bottom of the sea!—OLD SONG.

So sung Nettie Dare, sitting on the gray rocks beside the sea, and watching the long swell as it came in from the east. It was the coast of New Bedford, off New Bedford, and the maiden who sang that old, old song of love and constancy was beautiful: young and fresh, with abundant hair, lustrous black eyes, and lips which seemed to ask for kisses. So thought the young sailor, Ned Valton, as he leaped down from the rocks and stood beside her.

"Will you take a token from me, Nettie?" he said, tenderly. "I, too, am going away across the sea."

"Ned!" she cried, "where did you come from?"

"I just dropped in," replied the gay young sailor, passing his arm about her waist. "I've only a little while to stay, my darling, but I will be long enough to tell you that I love you better than any creature on the earth. Put going out as mate, this trip, and I hope, when I come home, that the owners will think I have done well enough to make me captain. And if they do, your father will give you to me, for the captain of a whaler is a great man in New Bedford."

"But three years is a long, long time, Ned," said the girl. "I'd sooner see you follow any other vocation than the sea."

"It's the best I can do, dear girl. I've been a sailor since I was big enough to lift a marlin-spike, and I shall be a sailor till I die."

He took a small gold ring from his finger and cut it in two pieces with his knife, and gave her one.

"Keep it, Nettie," he said, "and in the day when you get it back you may know that the hand that held the token is cold in the dust or under the sea. Then you may bid good-by forever to your sailor lover, and look for another. I don't want to hamper you, my girl. If, when I am gone, you find another you care for more than poor Ned Valton—"

"Ned!"

"I won't say what I was going to say, then, and indeed I never doubted you. But I must say good-by, for the Dolphin has set the signal to recall the boats, and it won't be long before the anchor is off the bottom. One kiss, my darling, and then a long good-by."

He clasped her in his arms, and their lips met in a long and tender kiss. At this moment they heard a hissing laugh, and starting quickly, Ned Valton saw a man in a seaman's garb standing upon the rocks above, and looking down at them.

"I don't like to interfere, Ned, old boy," said the man, "but we must make the best of this wind. Go down to the 'Ship' and find the second mate, and go to the boat. I'll stroll along the shore, and get there as soon as you."

It was Captain Saul Wilson of the ship Dolphin—a successful captain, one who never went upon the whaling grounds but that he filled up before the rest of the fleet—a man who never lost a ship, and who made money for his owners; who could command almost any "lay" when he wished to change service.

"I'll go, captain," said the young man. "Nettie and I have made a bargain, and if I come back after doing good work, and the owners give me command of the new ship they are going to build, she is to be my wife. Kiss me again, Nettie; Saul knows that we love each other."

Again he pressed her to his heart, and then tore himself away.

"Take her home, Captain Saul," he said; "I can't stay."

He sprang over the rocks and disappeared, and Captain Saul gave Nettie his arm. She took it, and as she walked along the shell-strewn beach she looked up again and again into the weatherbeaten face of Saul Wilson. It was not a stern face, but that of a man who had suffered in secret. His eyes, even now, had a dreamy look, and he kept them steadily turned away from her.

For he loved her.

Little did Nettie Dare know that this man had given her all the wealth of a great heart and had been hesitating until Ned Valton, younger, more ardent and handsome than himself, had taken his place, and he saw the great hope of his life slip away from him, leaving him, as he had seen wrecks of ships, stranded and forsaken, on a desolate shore.

He dared not look at her, for he loved Ned Valton, and he feared for himself. Once or twice the thought came to him: "If he should die; if anything should happen to him on the voyage!" But he drove the thought out of his heart, and when they came near the cottage of old Captain Dare he bade her good-by by an elder brother might have done, and hurried down to the boat, which lay there in waiting, with only three men in it. Soon Ned and the boat were gone, and the latter took an oar, and the boat shot away toward the ship. Two hours later the anchor was hoisted, the head-sails filled, and the Dolphin bore away on her distant voyage.

Months had passed, and again we see the Dolphin. She is on the sperm-whale fishing grounds, and a look at her is enough to show that she has seen service. There is an oily look about her, and the men have a more appearance. The odor of oil is everywhere, and even now the sea-gulls are busy. On either side of the ship a strange object is suspended, the head of a gigantic sperm-whale, and the men are working in the great cells scooping out the rich sperm from the depths.

"I'd like to see the heads as soon as we can, captain," said Ned Valton. "I don't like the look of the sky."

Saul Wilson cast a gloomy look to leeward, and saw that a storm was brewing.

Let it come, he said, in a sorry tone. "I think it will be better for me if the next storm sent the Dolphin to the bottom. Curse it, why do you stand staring at me! I'd have you know that you've got a man to deal with, Ned Valton."

"I'd used to think so, Saul," said Ned, sadly. "Well, well; this voyage must come to an end, some time."

"Do you want me to send you forward among the men?" cried the captain, fiercely. "By heaven, I'll do it if you don't look out. I won't stand a sea-sick man, you know."

Ned went forward without a word. He did not understand all this. From the moment the ship had rounded the Horn Saul Wilson had begun to show his hatred of the man who had been his friend, and he knew that he was right, and the captain repeatedly interfered with him in the line of his duties, where no captain who has any respect for his first mate will interfere. The men muttered among themselves that he would hear the captain say that he would "work up" with which they tore the hunter from the saddle, bound and gagged him without noise or outcry, was very significant.

"You take the boss on ahead, Mart. Tell the boss we've got his man. He'll find us over to Glinsk's. Pull out lively, now. 'T looks like we was goin' to hev a harricane in good earnest."

The man addressed as Mart sprang into the saddle and thundered away at full speed, soon disappearing among the huge boles of the cottonwood trees.

"Now, stranger," added the fellow, addressing the prisoner, "we mean business, chuck up. I won't swar you'll git out o' this ere mess with a hull skin, for that's jest as the boss says; but you'll hev the trail all the easier if you make up your mind to grin an' baw what ye can't help. You've got to git over 's fur's Glinsk's—better'n two mile—an' that afore sundown. 'Ll you walk?"

"Ef he don't, we'll jest drag him by the heels," cried the other ruffian. "Blamed if I tote the warrant."

"You don't need, Bob—len' a han'—so!" and the captive was raised to his feet. He's goin' to be sensible an' walk—sence he can't help hisself."

Realizing the utter folly of provoking his captors, John Fielding submitted to the inevitable and obediently followed the winding trail through the thickly-timbered bottom, as indicated by the two footpads.

His mind was busy enough during that enforced tramp. The words of the three men plainly showed that their object in this waylaying him was not for money alone, since they had made no effort to search him, beyond removing his weapons. His active memory, moreover, could recall the name of but one person who had ever borne him enemy bitter enough to use such stern measures to insure his revenge; but one—and word had come, long since, that he was dead. The source of the news seemed trustworthy. There could not well be an error; and yet—

"You slip ahead, Bob, and see ef thar's anybody thar with Ellen. Ef Tom Cowden is makin' 'round, we've got to bluff him off. He's so blamed sweet on the gal, and she's durned contrary, it'd be jest our luck of she was to set him on to makin' a muss."

"I most wish she would—"

"An' you'd hev the hull kentry climbin' up our backs wild fer ha'r. Twon't do, Bob; Tom's too well-known fer that. Go—make ha'r back."

Ten minutes later the squat, black-browed ruffian returned, announcing that the coast was clear.

"We ain't none too soon, nuther," said the other, with a sweeping glance at the threatening sky. "If we don't ketch go-long afore another hour, then I can't read the signs."

"It'd be a joke on us ef that little saplin'd take a notion to lay down to git out o' the wind," added Bob, with a laugh, as they entered a desolate-looking clearing in which stood a small, square log-cabin.

"The sapling" alluded to was an enormous sycamore tree, dead, yet with wide-spreading top, which stood a few rods to the rear of the cabin. Girdled, fire-scarred and decaying at the roots, there was some foundation for the outlaw's speech.

"Thar's the gal! slide ahead, Bob, an' keep the door. It'd be jest like her to slam it shut in our faces, when she sees how the stranger's rigged out."

There seemed some foundation for this fear, for the girl—a tall, robust, yet fairly handsome young woman—barred their passage, a stern light in her large gray eye.

"Some more of your deviltry, Zenas Black! I'll hev the bottom wide enough to hide your dirty actions, without bringing them over an honest man's doorstep!"

"We've got your pap's word fer leave, Nell. Git inside an' blow up your fire, fer ef they ain't fared no better'n we hev, the boss an' your pap 'll be mighty sharp-shooters fer grub. Thar's a good gal—make way, Nell—the storm's comin' like a house afire!"

"Lookin' fer Tom Cowden, an' s'fard we'll spile the courtin'," said Bob, with a coarse laugh.

"If you thought there was any chance of his comin' to-night you'd run for the brush, hot-foot, Bob Barker!" sharply retorted the young woman, but making way for the men to enter, a privilege of which they gladly availed themselves, as the dust and twigs began to sweep past on the wings of the bursting storm.

For a few moments they all stood in silence

her, my boys; start every plank and stretcher, but pull. Brace up, Ned! we are coming!"

As he spoke a red light flashed from the bow of the ship, and a blood-red glare fell upon the sea. Benton was burning red fire to show them where the young mate was. Then they saw him, rising upon the crest of a mighty wave and again sinking from sight, but struggling manfully to keep afloat. Then from the ship rose a resounding shout, and the drowning man took heart and struggled manfully. But, weighed down by his heavy clothing, he was nearly spent, and all at once they saw him shoot up his hands, and, with the name of the girl he loved upon his lips, go down in the dark water. Then, in the glare of the red fire, they saw the captain rise in the stern-sheets and plunge head foremost into the water. A moment of wild suspense, and then the head of Saul Wilson appeared above the waves, and a wild shout went up as they saw that he bore upon one arm the form of the young mate. A moment more and they were in the boat and pulling toward the ship.

For that night, when Ned lay in his bunk, the captain came and told him how he had loved Nettie for five years, and how his passion drove him nearly mad. But his good angel triumphed, and three years after, when Ned Valton and Nettie were married, Saul Wilson said amen to the prayer for their happiness with a fervent heart. He never married, but all through life they had no better friend than the captain of the Dolphin.

"Vengeance is Mine."

BY JOS. E. BADGER, JR.

"EASE UP thar, stranger! Keep your han's off 'm them 'ar pop-guns, less ye want to go to thunder by 'xpress!"

Trotting leisurely along the level bottom road, thinking only of reaching his destination for the night, John Fielding abruptly drew rein as a man stepped into the road from behind a dense clump of wild roses. This alone would have been startling, when the unenviable reputation of that portion of Missouri is considered, but when the rough-clad, brutal-looking stranger coolly leveled a cocked revolver, uttering a threat recorded above, it may well be pardoned the traveler if a cold thrill of something not far akin to fear, crept up and down his spinal column.

"You ain't a-goin' to be hurt, ef you take things easy, boss—leasewise by me," added the footpad, with a chuckle of complacency. "Jest so ye don't kick over the traces."

"Who are you and what do you want?"

"Fust, I want to know your name. Mebbe you ain't the man I'm lookin' fer, after all."

"My name is John Fielding—"

"Take him, boys—lively!"

At the words two men sprang from the dense undergrowth along the narrow road, and almost ere he could realize his peril, the traveler found himself lying upon the ground, a heavy knee pressing into his breast, a pair of brawny hands shutting off his breath with a vigor that caused his brain to reel, and a blood-red mist to star over his eyes. A second man secured the starry head, while the third—he who had halted the rider, held himself in readiness for prompt action in whatever quarter the necessity might arise. The whole affair, from beginning to end, plainly evidenced that these men were engaged in no unfamiliar task; the cool and adroit celebrity with which they tore the hunter from the saddle, bound and gagged him without noise or outcry, was very significant.

"You take the boss on ahead, Mart. Tell the boss we've got his man. He'll find us over to Glinsk's. Pull out lively, now. 'T looks like we was goin' to hev a harricane in good earnest."

The man addressed as Mart sprang into the saddle and thundered away at full speed, soon disappearing among the huge boles of the cottonwood trees.

"Now, stranger," added the fellow, addressing the prisoner, "we mean business, chuck up. I won't swar you'll git out o' this ere mess with a hull skin, for that's jest as the boss says; but you'll hev the trail all the easier if you make up your mind to grin an' baw what ye can't help. You've got to git over 's fur's Glinsk's—better'n two mile—an' that afore sundown. 'Ll you walk?"

"Ef he don't, we'll jest drag him by the heels," cried the other ruffian. "Blamed if I tote the warrant."

"You don't need, Bob—len' a han'—so!" and the captive was raised to his feet. He's goin' to be sensible an' walk—sence he can't help hisself."

Realizing the utter folly of provoking his captors, John Fielding submitted to the inevitable and obediently followed the winding trail through the thickly-timbered bottom, as indicated by the two footpads.

His mind was busy enough during that enforced tramp. The words of the three men plainly showed that their object in this waylaying him was not for money alone, since they had made no effort to search him, beyond removing his weapons. His active memory, moreover, could recall the name of but one person who had ever borne him enemy bitter enough to use such stern measures to insure his revenge; but one—and word had come, long since, that he was dead. The source of the news seemed trustworthy. There could not well be an error; and yet—

"You slip ahead, Bob, and see ef thar's anybody thar with Ellen. Ef Tom Cowden is makin' 'round, we've got to bluff him off. He's so blamed sweet on the gal, and she's durned contrary, it'd be jest our luck of she was to set him on to makin' a muss."

"I most wish she would—"

"An' you'd hev the hull kentry climbin' up our backs wild fer ha'r. Twon't do, Bob; Tom's too well-known fer that. Go—make ha'r back."

Ten minutes later the squat, black-browed ruffian returned, announcing that the coast was clear.

"We ain't none too soon, nuther," said the other, with a sweeping glance at the threatening sky. "If we don't ketch go-long afore another hour, then I can't read the signs."

"It'd be a joke on us ef that little saplin'd take a notion to lay down to git out o' the wind," added Bob, with a laugh, as they entered a desolate-looking clearing in which stood a small, square log-cabin.

"The sapling" alluded to was an enormous sycamore tree, dead, yet with wide-spreading top, which stood a few rods to the rear of the cabin. Girdled, fire-scarred and decaying at the roots, there was some foundation for the outlaw's speech.

"Thar's the gal! slide ahead, Bob, an' keep the door. It'd be jest like her to slam it shut in our faces, when she sees how the stranger's rigged out."

There seemed some foundation for this fear, for the girl—a tall, robust, yet fairly handsome young woman—barred their passage, a stern light in her large gray eye.

"Some more of your deviltry, Zenas Black! I'll hev the bottom wide enough to hide your dirty actions, without bringing them over an honest man's doorstep!"

"We've got your pap's word fer leave, Nell. Git inside an' blow up your fire, fer ef they ain't fared no better'n we hev, the boss an' your pap 'll be mighty sharp-shooters fer grub. Thar's a good gal—make way, Nell—the storm's comin' like a house afire!"

"Lookin' fer Tom Cowden, an' s'fard we'll spile the courtin'," said Bob, with a coarse laugh.